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ANNOUNCEMENT.

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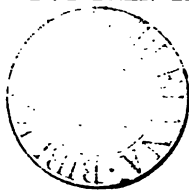
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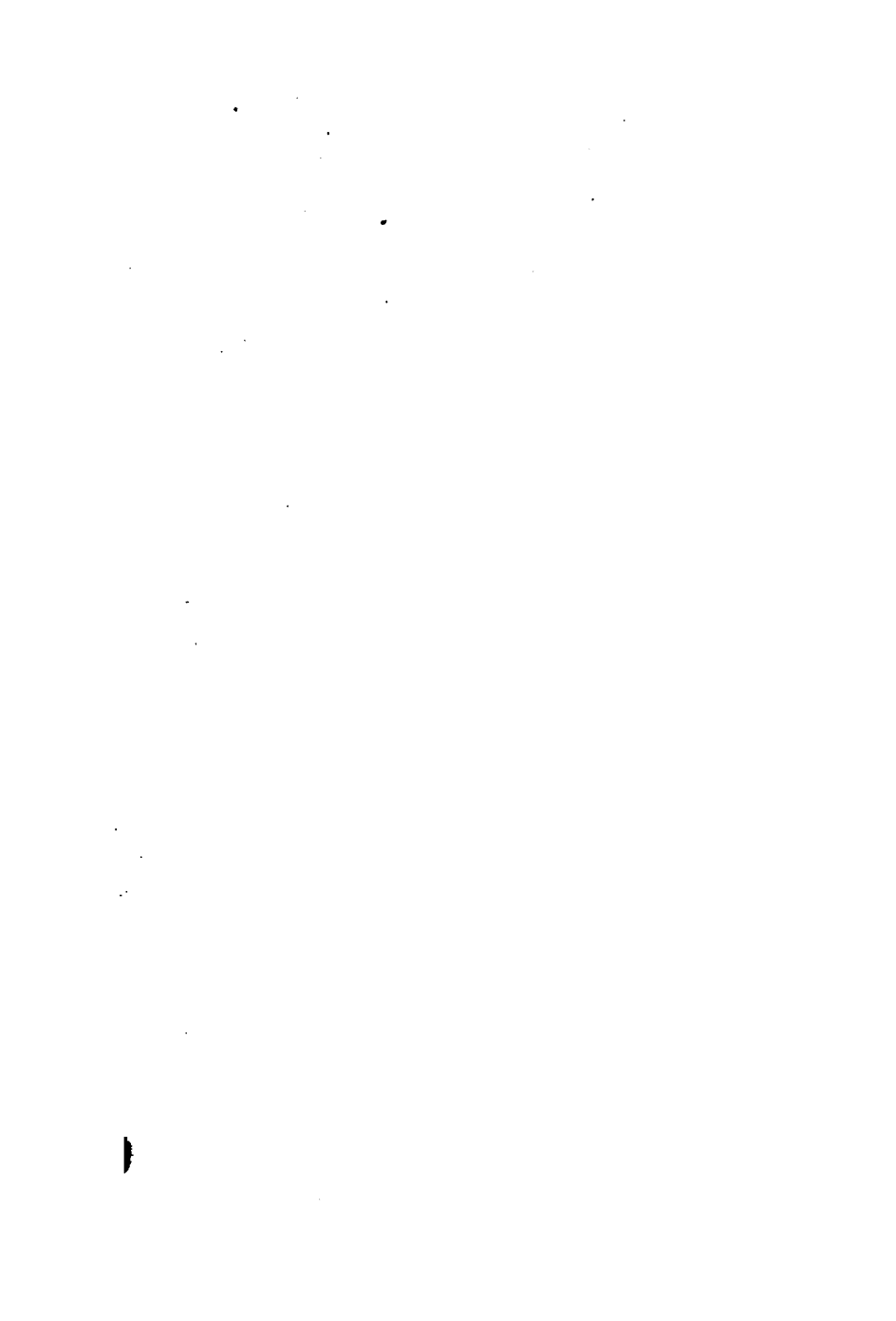
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TO LOVE AND TO BE LOVED.

CHAPTER I.

THOSE of my readers who were acquainted with the city of New York some forty years since, will be able to call to mind the Old Fly-Market, together with the broken brick pavements, the small wooden buildings, and the etceteras which then distinguished that portion of the great city.

They will probably also remember a very little street running parallel with said Fly-Market, and within sight and scent thereof, down towards the river.

The necessity for this passage, so narrow that it would only allow a single cart to traverse it, and so near to wider thoroughfares running in the same direction, has ever been a doubtful matter; and the reasons for allowing it, are lost with the good folks who planned this once so important portion of the city, and who have long since passed away.

At one corner of this lane, there once stood a low, wooden building of a dark leaden colour; it had four windows on —— street, and two doors, all of them near the

ground, the former covered with dust and cobwebs, which had been collecting there for more than twenty years, nothing but the rains of heaven having washed them for at least that period. Around the doors could always be seen two or three weather-beaten boxes, upon one of which reposed something in the shape of a paint keg ; between the windows lay a row of tar barrels, some whole and some partly emptied, while contiguous to them and resting against the front of the building, was an enormous anchor, with one fluke partly buried in the ground, affording a convenient lounge, on which some half-score of negroes could, in a hot summer's afternoon, enjoy their fill of laughter and sunshine.

On entering the building, the eye immediately wandered over a confused mass of articles that lay hither and thither : coils of newly-tarred rope, bunches of black shining chains, barrels somewhat resembling those at the door, kegs of various sizes, pulleys, large iron rings, spikes, tin canisters, and sea-lanterns ; some of these were to be seen, and some a stranger might stumble over, for it was never very light. But they are not to be mentioned as samples of what lay back, stowed away in the recesses of this long building. All that a ship might need, from a ball of tow-yarn to a best bower-anchor, could there be had.

On the left hand of the entrance stood a partition, with two sliding lights and a glass door opening into the sanctum of the wealthy ship chandlers, Messrs. G. & A. Hunt.

These gentlemen were brothers ; they had begun the world together poor, and had tugged their way through the briars and thorns of business well on towards the top of the hill, enjoying a fine run of trade, with a store full

of goods and no notes out, and with no account in any bank.

The elder had married early in life, a lady who knew well, and almost too well, how to save his earnings. Children were not added to their stock of earthly good things, so that their property accumulated to their hearts' content.

The younger brother, although much the most comely of the two, had contented himself as a bachelor, and, as an exception against the connubial state, was much the most liberal; the elder Mr. Hunt being looked upon, and I fear with some reason, as rather a close man. You would not have thought so, however, as you entered his office, and saw him sitting in his arm-chair before the little grate fire; his full, round face would turn up to you so pleasantly, and he would bid you such a hearty good morning, you might have taken him as a personification of benevolence. But let him know that you wanted a little aid, no matter how trifling, for poor Christians, or poor heathen, or any cause whatever, and a mighty change was at once visible. The spectacles would be taken down from the forehead, and put in their proper place before the eyes, the smile would fly away like a flash, the poker would be used very briskly in stirring up the fire, and there would be suddenly so many orders issued to the clerk, and so many things to be put up, and such hints about people being prudent, and about charity at home, that very likely you would wish that you had said nothing about the matter, and watch for an opening to make a decent retreat.

At the time when my story commences some little

changes were in agitation, more especially to suit the wishes of the younger Mr. Hunt, who was somewhat anxious, now that they had acquired an independence, to be relieved from the drudgery of business. His desire was, that a young man who had been with them some years, a nephew, and bearing their name, should be taken in as a partner, and that a clerk of suitable abilities be procured to take the place of him who was to be elevated.

The elder Mr. Hunt disliked changes of any kind, and especially such as would involve expense, but being strongly attached to his brother, and finding that his heart was set upon the matter, he had finally yielded, and Rudolph Hunt, for that was the name of the young man, was duly published as a partner of the concern; he had also so far agreed to the second requisition that an advertisement appeared in the *New York Gazette*, informing the public, that the firm of G. and A. Hunt wanted a person competent to take charge of a set of books, and willing to engage in any department of their business.

Many applications immediately followed this announcement, for the great city was just then suffering under one of those terrible revulsions in trade which occasionally falls upon the business community, and throws a gloom over every mercantile interest; when merchants stand listlessly at their doors, or lounge in their office chairs, thinking over bad speculations, bad debts, doubtful notes, and heavy payments ahead. Sad indeed, at such a time, is the fate of those who, dismissed because there is no work for them to do behind the counter or at the desk, are obliged to look for new situations in the only employment to which they have been trained, and by which they can

earn their bread. No wonder, then, that a cloud of applicants should at once have been aroused, when an opportunity was thus made known for an engagement with a firm long established, and beyond the chances and changes of trade.

But there seemed to be some objection, especially in the mind of the elder partner, to all who had hitherto applied, until it appeared a very doubtful case whether any addition would, after all, be made to the numerical force of the establishment.

A few days, however, after the advertisement appeared, a young man called, whose gentlemanly address and apparent ability to fill the situation, so satisfied the younger brother and the junior partner, that, as the elder Mr. Hunt was absent, they had, upon their own responsibility, requested him to call again at nine o'clock the next morning.

The next morning had arrived, and it wanted but a few minutes of the appointed hour. The two brothers were seated, each in an arm-chair, before the little grate fire.

There was a similarity in the features of the two, for both had full, round faces, and small, twinkling eyes, but to an acute observer, the expressions were very unlike. In the younger could clearly be seen the open, manly, generous spirit, combining with a shrewd and somewhat waggish propensity. In the other, care and close calculation were plainly legible.

"Well, brother, what shall we conclude about this young man? it is almost 9 o'clock;" and the younger Mr. Hunt, as he said this, laid down the morning paper upon his knee, and looked inquiringly at his brother, with an arch smile trembling at the corners of his mouth.

"I don't know, I'm sure, what to do about it; there ain't any of the young men now-a-days that seem to be good for anything; they think more of their watch chains and fine coats than they do of work."

As Mr. Gerardus, or as he was sometimes called, Mr. Geordie Hunt, said this, he pulled down his spectacles and took up the poker, striking with rather a jerky air some stray cinders that had fallen too far upon the hearth.

Knowing pretty well for whom this hint was intended, the younger Mr. Hunt turned a smiling eye over towards the desk where the junior partner was busy with his books; Rudolph did love watch chains and fine coats; he smiled in answer to the look of his uncle, and kept on with his work.

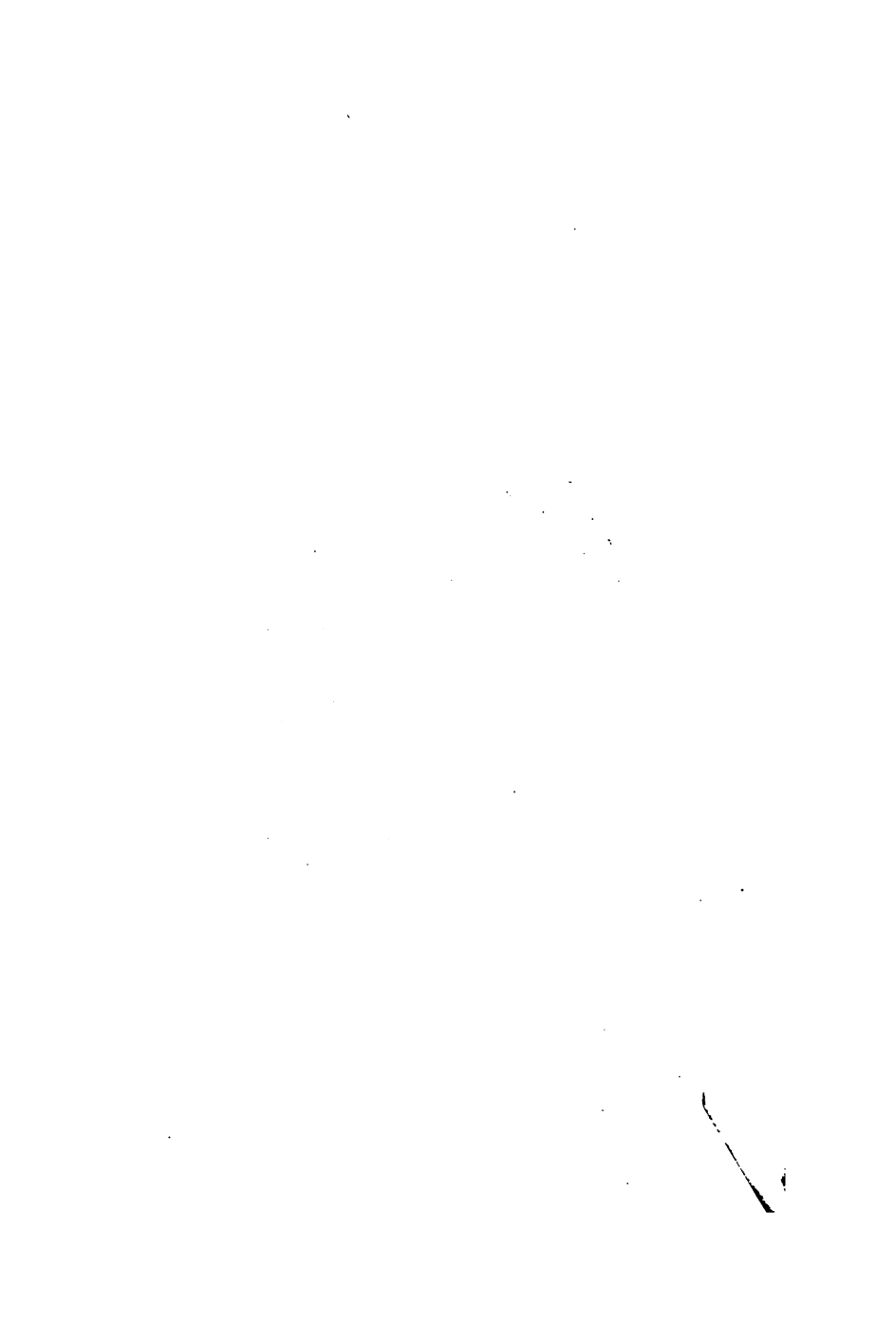
"I'm afraid it is too true, what you say, brother; but we can't make them over. The world has changed some since our young days. Watches don't cost so much as they once did, nor coats either. But what we can't cure we must put up with."

"Yes, I suppose so,"—with a heavy sigh.

"We want a young man; you and I are getting along in life; we don't care to work as we once did, and nephew can't be out-door man and in-door clerk too—ain't that clear, brother?"

"Why, I suppose it must be so; but I should judge from what you tell about the youngster, that he is a delicate kind of a person, not fit to work."

"Oh! by no means, brother; you mistake, you mistake: you don't understand. He is, to be sure, very gentlemanly in his manners. You don't object to that?"





"Oh! no, no, no."

"I said that he appeared like one that had been well brought up: brought up with care."

"Well, well, well; just as you and Rudolph say. If we must have him, we must; that's all."

"Not at all; no must about it, brother. I want you to be satisfied, especially as he is to be in your family. But here he comes."

The appearance of the young man did, indeed, warrant the idea which the elder Mr. Hunt had received, "that he was a delicate kind of a person," for his countenance was pale, except a slight flush, which suffused it on the moment of entering; and there was a softness to his complexion, bordering upon effeminacy, but which was happily relieved by his raven hair and keen black eye.

He was evidently under strong excitement; for when the elder Mr. Hunt questioned him, in his scrutinising way, as to his knowledge of business, and his ability to keep accounts, and his willingness to do whatever he was called upon to do about the store, he answered promptly and to the point; but there was a tremor in his voice, and his countenance assumed a more pallid hue; it was evident that the situation was one of great moment to him.

Mr. Geordie Hunt was allowed to do all the questioning, and he clearly manifested more complacency towards the applicant than for any other that had appeared before him; he was either pleased with his answers, or affected by the expression of sadness which was a marked feature of his countenance.

"Well, so far, so good—and now to whom did you say that you referred?"

The young man hesitated ; he did not appear to understand the question.

"My brother means—to whom do you refer as to your—as to your habits of business?—as to your character, and so on?—with whom have you lived? Being strangers to one another, you know that some such thing is usual."

"Oh, certainly, sir, certainly—you are correct. But I shall have a difficulty here that I did not anticipate. I have been in my father's office for the last three years, or since he came from the South, and my father, even if you thought proper to receive his testimonial, is too unwell to give it."

Again the colour mantled his cheek, and the tremor of his voice was more manifest.

A sudden change, too, had come over the mind of the elder Mr. Hunt, for he turned towards the fire, and again commenced operations with the poker.

The younger brother observing this, and well knowing what the sign meant, gave up at once all hope that any engagement would be entered into just then. He felt, however, very unwilling thus to part with the young man. He was more interested in him than at the first interview—there was a manliness and frankness in his whole demeanour, which, united with his modest and pleasant manners, won each moment upon the really tender feelings of the younger Mr. Hunt.

Rudolph was also an interested listener ; and, when he saw the signs of non-committalism on the part of his senior uncle, beckoned the former to his desk.

"Right, right, well—well, perhaps we'd better—" And then turning towards the young man—

"My nephew suggests that perhaps you had better leave your address, and we may send you word in a few days."

"Certainly, sir;" and stepping to the desk, with great rapidity and neatness, he wrote his own name and that of his father, with the number and street where he resided.

"Had you not better, Mr. Edwards," said Rudolph, as he looked at the paper which the young man handed to him, "put down the number of your father's office, or place of business?"

"My father, sir, has no office at present; he gave it up nearly two months since, and for that reason I am seeking a situation: he did business at No. — Pine Street."

CHAPTER II.

It was a stormy night in the city; fitful gusts of wind roared through the narrow streets, and the heavy rain poured down in torrents. The poor crouched together in their wretched tenements, huddled like sheep within their pens, and the rich laughed lightly in their lighted halls, or rolled in their sumptuous carriages to the ball-room, the theatre, or the splendid party.

Death waits not for storm or sunshine. Within a dwelling in one of the upper streets, respectable in appearance, and furnished with such conveniences as distinguish the habitations of those who rank among the higher classes of society, a man of middle age lay on his last bed, momentarily waiting the final summons. All that the most skilful medical attendance; all that love, warm as the glow that fires an angel's bosom, could do, had been done: by day and night for many long weeks, had ministering spirits, such as a devoted wife and loving children are, done all within their power to ward off the blow. But there he lay, his raven hair smoothed off from his noble brow, his dark eyes lighted with unnatural brightness, and contrasting strongly with the pallid hue which marked him as an expectant of the dread messenger.

Beside him stood a youth of eighteen, fresh with health, but with every feature softened into a look of tenderest love.

"Would, God, I could die for thee, O my father!" was plainly written on his beautiful countenance; his hand was within that of the dying man, and the bright eye of the father was fixed upon him, as though thoughts, too many and too overpowering, were agonising to let their fulness out.

"My dear boy, it is almost over." The tones were soft and trembling, and, as they fell upon the ear of the youth, the tears dropped freely; but he answered not.

"It has been a weary course—a toil for nothing, James—but you know it all; I have tried hard to resist the torrent that has been pressing against me."

"Dear father, let these thoughts of the past go. You have done your best."

A hectic flush tinged the cheek of the sufferer, as though the soft tones of that boy had started the life-blood anew.

"Yes, James, you are right, I have done with the past now. But the future!—not mine. I have no fears for myself; I am going to rest; but those dear ones—your mother—your sisters—and yourself. I leave you nothing—not even one friend to aid you."

The drops were gathering on his marble brow, and releasing his hand from his father's grasp, the youth gently wiped them away.

"Dear father, try to think that God will be with us, as he has ever been."

"Yes, yes, yes,—God—my father—Oh, yes—I will trust."

The wind roared by, and the heavy rain poured its floods against the closed windows. Again the youth pressed his father's hand.

"But I can do no more. I leave you, my dear boy, my last, my best blessing. You have comforted my dark hours. You have denied yourself all youthful enjoyments for my sake—you have been a most devoted son. God bless you—God be your——"

The strong yearnings of the parent could not find vent in words. The effort already made was too much for his exhausted frame, and his short and troubled breathing warned the youth that its work was nearly ended.

Around the bed, in mute and helpless agony, were soon clustered the dear ones of his heart. His eye rested a moment with eloquent intensity on each of his children, bidding the long farewell;—and then on her, who had been his first and only love, the partner of his life's journey, and treasurer of his warm affections, he fixed his last, long look, until its brightness faded away beneath the film of death.

It is broad daylight. The sun is shining brightly, and the busy throng jostle each other in the crowded street, as they are hurrying on their life's errand.

In the same chamber lies a corpse, prepared with becoming care for its long resting-place. Beside the pale tenement of clay stands the same youth. His hands are folded, and his eye fixed mournfully on those cold, stiff features. Past scenes in his young life are flitting through his mind in quick succession. He remembers that parent

when the sun shone brightly o'er him ; and he remembers, too, when dark clouds gathered thick, and poured their storms upon him ; how his own young heart had agonised in sympathy for the sorrow which that parent had endured, until the whole power of his mind was enlisted in the single effort of soothing his disturbed feelings.

That troubled heart is now at rest. No words of consolation more it needs ; no filial faithfulness ; no eye of watchful love. The secret bond is severed, and the impenetrable veil has dropped its heavy folds around that pale, cold sleeper.

But those tears, which fall so silently, tell no common tale. And yet within that crowded mart, how many sons are daily called to stand beside a father's corpse. Death walks his round among the rich and poor, and lays his icy hand alike on the weary sufferer, and the pampered devotee of pleasure.

Death heeds not ties of love, nor frantic widows' tears, nor the wail of helpless orphans ; but round and round he treads his solemn way. No place, no time, no circumstance of being turns his step aside. The palace gate unlocks at his approach, and amidst its splendid trappings on he strides and lays his victim on a gilded couch. And into the low, lonely hut of destitution, amid crumbling ruins, and where pale want sits brooding, he steals along, and the poor sufferer, on his bed of straw, quivers and is still.

It was no common tale, I said, which should reveal the secrets of that youthful heart. True filial love is a passion not so generally possessed as many think. In the hour of childhood, and before cold and foreign influences

have affected the free and pure play of the heart, we all know with what assurance of protection, with what confidence in his wisdom, justice, power, and love, the little one looks up to him whom he calls father. But as the wayward passions increase in strength, as they often meet the stern and just rebuke, feelings of restraint and fear arise and throw their icy chill upon that holy tie. And oft the world comes in, that heartless creation, which knows no sacredness in love, and sees no beauty in the homely bonds of life; that selfish, soulless, poisoning world, throws its deadening shadow on the fresh, young heart; and while the outward show is still observed, because dependence binds him within the circle of parental power, all that was beautiful in the heart's first yearnings, all that was heaven-born in its obedience and confidence, all that threw around the sacred person and sacred name of father a halo more than earthly, has departed.

But this youth had never known one cold or selfish thought in connexion with that fond parent, over whose lifeless body his tears are falling; no reproaches agonise his heart as he gazes upon those marble features; his young life has been one devoted day of truest filial love, and now he weeps that he can do no more.

John T. Edwards succeeded his father in the possession of Pine-grove estate, in North Carolina. The property had been handed down from father to son for some generations, but each succeeding inheritor found a new accumulation of debt, with an additional number of acres to be classed as old field, and of little value. They had, however, clung to the spot, incumbered as it was, partly because the revenue from it was still great, and enabled

the possessor to live in respectable style, and partly because of some feelings, which are common to all, and among the best we have—a fondness for the spot which has been the home of our ancestors, and which is entwined in our memories with our happy childhood years. There was, perhaps, not one of all who had called this Home, whose attachment to it was so strong, and whose appreciation of its natural beauties and its ancestral charms was more true and quickening; and yet there was not one less fitted to cope with the difficulties with which it was trammelled. For fifteen years he struggled with them, until disgusted with the protracted trial, he yielded to circumstances he could not control, sold the estate, and with the remnant of his fortune, removed to the city of New York, and commenced a mercantile life. But neither was he fitted, by nature or training, for the new station in which he had placed himself. He was not a money-making man. He could not so bind the fine feelings of his sensitive mind, as to get them interested in making a bargain. Neither could he sympathise with the multitude in their scramble for the treasures of earth; his mind shrunk away from the bustling throng and kept close communion with itself; dark thoughts often troubled it; dark clouds were continually about him; bright rays seldom cheered his path, and when they did, it was but an April sunshine with its following shadow.

Within the domestic circle his spirit delighted to repose; to his lovely wife, his charming daughters, and his devoted son, he was all that they could ask. Around them were entwined all the sympathies of his soul, and on their pure love he rested, and could he but have retired

with them to some calm retreat, free from distracting care, life would have been to him a summer's journey.

But thus it could not be; he was in the deep waters, and must struggle on although in vain. It would be no pleasant task, either to my readers or myself, to picture out to them the dark scene of a declining fortune, or to open to their view the trying, soul-sickening experience of him who is called to witness the rapid strides of coming poverty. A few years he battled with the foe, his spirit broke beneath the stern encounter, and he sunk to his long rest.

James had been fully acquainted with all his father's trials, and his sympathies were strongly excited. He was his constant companion through all the hours of business, encouraging by his cheerful smile and pleasant words whenever a favourable aspect was presented, and through all adverse and untoward changes, still holding up before him that hope of better times, which his fond father would have believed in if he could.

No youthful recreation had any charm for him if he saw the shade of sorrow on his father's brow. Blest youth ! what son that mourns a father dead, but envies those rich tears which bathe thine eyes, and fall so silently before that sacred dust. It might not shame an angel's brow thus to let out the fulness of a heart like thine ; and if the fond spirit that lives no more within that tenement of clay looks, from his hidden resting-place upon his noble boy and reads his thoughts, it will almost make that better state more blissful to know the true, fond, living love that burns within thy bosom.

The funeral solemnities are over. There has been no

lack of followers to the narrow house. The world has done its part in the funeral pageant. Many questions have been asked and answered as to the peculiarities of him whom they were following to the narrow house, and as to the circumstances in which he had left his family. Acquaintances have called and expressed their sympathy with the bereaved family; and then it was left alone. The world is called cold and unfeeling. Perhaps it is; at least it would not be surprising if, to those who call it hard names, it should present rather a severe aspect; but we ought to keep in mind that the world, as we call it, is made up of little circles, in which each atom lives, and moves, and concentrates its interest. That the world did not feel for this little family was simply because the world knew nothing of it, and therefore it was left alone.

A few days after the funeral, a little red flag was displayed from a window of this same building, and all the morning, persons of various descriptions were going in and out, and the sharp stroke of the auctioneer's little hammer and his lively voice could be heard, mingled at times with the merry laugh which his smart repartee had excited; and then carts were driving up to the door in quick succession, bearing off loads of household goods, *dear* to those who lately owned them, by all that was sacred in associations of parental and conjugal love, but only to be prized hereafter for the cheapness at which they had been purchased.

Throughout the day the scene continued, and the last load was not wheeled away until the shades of evening drew on. The little flag then disappeared. Strangers' feet ceased to pollute the spoiled home, and the little

family close the door, and cluster around the fireside, where they had so often gathered.

It is a great mistake, which many are apt to indulge, that those who have enjoyed an elevated station in society, are disqualified to bear reverse of fortune; that those who have walked proudly on the summit level, cannot descend to the lowest depths of life and bear the ills of poverty without proportional distress. This is not so. The mind that has long cherished independent feelings—that has been refined by intercourse with polished circles—that has been accustomed to the homage of the many, and mingled with the nobler ones of earth as equals, still maintains its dignity and self-respect, when far, far down, it walks the humble, narrow path. The cottage, the menial employment, the pitying, sneering world cannot bend its towering crest, nor tear from it that proud support—its own self-respect.

Mrs. Edwards had been well aware that the circumstances of her husband were such as held out to her the certainty of a great and sad change; fain would she have urged him to descend at once, to relinquish the struggle with opposing fortune, and be poor that he might be happy. But she knew well how sensibly alive he was to anything that concerned her standing in the world; he had taken her from its highest station, and there he wished to retain her; and when she knew the worst, when poverty, in all its cold and forbidding aspect, was full in view, she shrunk not from its presence, but, with a calm and steady look, prepared to meet its stern realities.

She was still in the prime of life, and her beauty fresh upon her. The two lovely plants, her daughters, were but

images of her former self. Mary, the eldest, was just fifteen; and Julia, nearly two years younger. Trained in an atmosphere of love, their beautiful features were but emblems of their warm and noble hearts.

"It has been a trying day to you, mother, but it is all over now."

"Yes, my son, but it was a necessary sacrifice. Your father cannot now be remembered by anyone as his debtor."

"That is a happy thought, dear mother," said Mary, her bright eye kindling with emotion, as it looked full upon the sad, yet beautiful countenance of her parent; "if we have no friends, we can exult in the thought that we are no man's debtor."

"It has, indeed, been a trial, which once I could not have supposed it possible to bear. I mean what we have gone through this day. To hear strangers jesting over sacred relics of our family, to see rude hands carrying off what, to us, is associated with our tenderest feelings. Oh! it has agitated me strangely. One thought alone has enabled me to bear it."

"You mean dear father's last wish?"

"Yes, Mary, the idea of leaving the world with a blot upon his name—you know that his views on that subject were peculiar, but they were noble and just. He considered a debt uncanceled a moral taint."

"I made him a solemn promise, mother, that everything should be paid, to the last farthing."

"But, James, my dear son! how did you know that it could be accomplished?"

"Why, mother, I pledged my strength, my life, for that one object, and the support of my mother and sisters, and

Thus has he bound himself to the hearts of this family, by such ties as can never be destroyed, while they retain the remembrance of him for whom those deeds of love were performed.

As yet, the visitor had not spoken; he seemed to feel that he was on sacred ground; that he was connected in dear remembrance with all that was tender and heart-rending of the scenes of the few past days.

"You are truly welcome, Mr. Upjohn; we feel rather sad this evening after the events of the day, and were now talking about our plans for the future."


He turned towards Mrs. Edwards as she addressed him, and answered in trembling tones—

"It's hard, madam; it must be very hard. It makes my heart sick to see the great change. But to you, madam, who have always had a plenty to do with, it must be severe indeed. It makes my heart ache to think of it."

"God orders our changes, you know, Mr. Upjohn. We must therefore submit patiently to whatever his will appoints."

There was no reply to this remark, unless a slight clearing of the throat, and a change of position, and the smoothing down of his foretop, which already lay as though it had been arranged with more than common care, might be taken as such. Mr. Upjohn could not, with all his heart, assent to the proposition; but he did not like to object to it.

"I am very glad that you have called this evening, sir, for I have no one to advise with, and just now we are much in doubt what course to pursue. Perhaps, my son, you have mentioned to Mr. Upjohn some of your plans."



"I have, mother, but Mr. Upjohn thinks that you will not be pleased with the country."

"I will tell you, madam; my first thought was, when Master James mentioned the matter to me, as he had been telling some of his troubles, and how things are not just as you wish them, my first thought was that you, madam, and these two young ladies would not be used to the ways of the country. The country is pleasanter, no doubt, than this great Babel of brick and mortar, and country folks are clever enough in their way; but a body must know how to take 'em—and seeing that yourself and these young ladies have never been used to the rough and tumble of life, you might find it not so agreeable."

"But, Mr. Upjohn, it will not answer for us, now, to be particular as to where we live nor how we fare; we are poor now, sir, very poor. And all we seek is a shelter and—"

James looked at his mother with an expression of deep sorrow.

"I do not wish to pain your feelings, my dear son, and will not say what I was intending to. But poverty, James, is no disgrace, since we have reduced ourselves to feel its pinchings, that we might be honest."

"It is not that, mother; I care not for poverty; the shame attached to it does not trouble me. But when you talk of the pinchings of poverty. You shall not feel them, nor my sisters either. Let me only get you a home in some retired place; I know that I can do more than you imagine. If nothing more, I can work as a day-labourer. Only gratify me in this one wish; to take

the care of you on myself. You shall not want, you need not fear it; you must not talk about it."

The energy with which he spoke at once silenced the little company; his mother and sisters gazed at him with intense interest, but each with different feelings. The latter, with an expression of strong admiration beaming from their glistening eyes; the former with all the softness of a mother's love, and joy in witnessing this exhibition of his noble feelings, mingled with the painful thought that he knew but little of the stern realities of life's fearful struggle. Not willing to damp his filial ardour, she immediately changed the tenor of her remarks.

"Do you know of any place, Mr. Upjohn, not too far from the city, some retired village, that would be desirable as a residence for us?"

"I do know of a place, madam, that of all others, it seems to me, would be desirable for one in your situation. Not so much on account of the people: they are well enough, good sort of folks, and will no doubt treat you with much kindness. Country people are kind-hearted to strangers, I will say that of them; that is, if they don't hold their heads too high. But I was thinking that it would suit you, madam, and the young ladies, on account of the blessed minister they've got. There is many of that craft (asking your pardon, madam), that ain't no better than they ought to be; but Mr. Wharton is a prince among 'em; he's a true Christian, and a true gentleman, every inch of him, and his lady, if anything, is a little better than he is. She is a jewel of a woman, that Mrs. Wharton. They are none of your common, everyday folks. They seem to know what the world is made of, for

they have seen a great deal of it, and while they would never stoop their heads for the proudest of the land, for they have been bred among the highest folks, yet the poor man is always welcome at their fireside. God bless them—they are a noble pair.”

“Is it far from the city?” asked Mrs. Edwards and her daughters almost in the same breath, for they had become much interested.

“Not very far, madam; a day’s travel, not over thirty miles.”

The mother and sisters now turned an inquiring look at James, who was also listening to Mr. Upjohn with much interest. He immediately noted down such directions as were necessary to lead him to the spot, and then their kind-hearted visitor, after inquiring in what way he could be of any service to them now, and receiving again and again the outpouring of their grateful hearts for all that he had already done, and the assurance that they would call upon him when they needed, bade them a good night, and James accompanied him to the door.

“You won’t forget to call when you come to town, Master James, and let me know how they all fare. I feel much concern for your blessed mother, and those dear girls.”


And the old man let go the hand which James had given him at parting, and wiped away a tear, more precious *in* an angel’s eye than the costliest jewel that ever decked a monarch’s brow.

CHAPTER III.

It was a dark, chilly, November day; the clouds were flying fast across the murky sky, and strong gusts of wind at times swept along from the north-east, bending the tall poplars, and stretching out the more slender branches of the sturdy oak, and causing the forests to send forth a murmuring sound, as though spirits of evil were disturbing their lonely retreats.

A youthful traveller, dressed in rather light attire, such as would be more suitable for the streets of a city than for exposure to such a tempest in the open country, was just emerging from a small wood through which the highway led; and, as he did so, a country village of no great size, but of rather a pleasant aspect, opened before him. The spire of a well-conditioned country church first appeared, shooting up in pure white, and towering above the maples and willows which gracefully concealed, for the most part, the building itself: and on either side of the street, at intervals, for some distance, could be seen respectable dwellings, many of which were superior to the average of country habitations.

The day was drawing to a close, and it was with no little satisfaction that the youth found himself so near



the termination of his ride ; he was on horseback, and, as large drops of rain began to accompany the gusts of wind, he spurred up his beast into a canter, casting his eye upon each tenement as he passed, in search of the tavern sign which he knew must be somewhere at hand.

Upon a large elm, whose giant branches hung far over the highway, creaking on its rusty hinges as it swayed backwards and forwards at the sport of the winds, he soon espied this token of shelter and welcome. His horse committed to the stable-boy, and himself warmed and refreshed at the crackling, open fire, he stepped to the bar, and inquired of the landlord, who was busily engaged stirring the toddy stick for some thirsty customers, "Whether he could direct him to the residence of the minister of the place, the Rev. Mr. Wharton?"

"The parsonage is next door, sir," pointing at the same time through an end window, "it is that stone building you see close by."

The young man bowed his thanks, and immediately walked to the window and surveyed the premises. He would scarcely have needed to make the inquiry, if he had not been so intent upon that one object as he rode through the village, the sign-board. The building bore upon its aspect, in all its parts and accompaniments, such marks of sacredness and peace, that, had its name been engraven on its front, it could not, well, have been more readily distinguished.

It was a stone building, as the landlord had said, but stuccoed with a dark cement that gave it an appearance of great age, while the perfect order of the woodwork about it showed that it had been well guarded against the

ravages of time by judicious attention. It was two-storied, with a small back-building, and a wing on one side in front, which no one could mistake for anything else than the kitchen of the establishment. The house was set back sufficiently from the street to secure it against the dust of the traveller, and to afford a neat yard, in which shrubs were plentifully scattered; and two borders, lining the paved walk from the front door to the gate, gave tokens of summer flowers and sweet perfumes. A partition fence, the same with that which fronted the highway, separated this inclosure from the kitchen yard, so that nothing unsightly met the eye in front of the main building. Large trees encircled it, and their deep shadows added much to the sombre aspect it presented, at the same time foretelling cool and refreshing shade from summer's mid-day sun.

The young man surveyed the premises awhile, and then leaving the tavern, walked directly to the parsonage.

A neatly dressed domestic opened the door at his summons, and ushered him at once into the sitting-room, and the presence of the reverend gentleman and his lady. The former immediately arose from his seat before the fire, and bowing very gracefully, added his pleasant smile to that of his partner, who had already greeted the stranger. The young man had been affected by the external appearance of the house, and was prepared to judge favourably of persons and things within doors: he was not disappointed.

If there is a station in society involving responsibilities the most delicate and interesting—responsibilities that embrace in their hold on human sympathy all interests, both for this world and the next, it is the station of one who

has for many years been the pastor of a country parish ; and if there is an object of true moral beauty, combining in itself the sublime and the pleasing, it is the daily course of such a faithful servant of the Most High, now dropping a word of counsel into the ear of some wayward youth, now soothing the irritated feelings of some neighbour who has called to tell his tale of injuries, real or imaginary ; now binding in bonds of holy union those who wish to cast their lot in life together ; now at the sick-bed, bending with melting heart over one long known and loved, and feeding the flickering spirit with a few crumbs of angels' food ; now wiping away the tears that cannot be repressed, because a widow and her little ones are depositing in the narrow house their love and their stay ; and then, as the shadows of evening gather round, retiring to his little sanctuary, there to bear before his Father, his Master, his God, the cares, the pains, the sicknesses, the difficulties, the varied interests of those who had received his attention through the busy scenes of the day. Such scenes and duties, fully entered into, cannot fail to affect even the personal bearing of an individual, and to throw around many deficiencies in the outer man a sweet halo ; much more, when a commanding form, a benevolent and manly countenance, peculiar neatness in dress, and accomplished manners, add their mite to the holy influence.

As Mr. Wharton bowed to the young stranger, he might have been well taken as the personification of his office ; there was such a calm, easy, dignified manner, that was in perfect keeping with his appearance. His stature, a little above the common height, well proportioned, almost robust, and yet without any approach to grossness ; his face full,

and scarcely furrowed by age ; his forehead fair and smooth, and the thin powdered locks that but faintly covered his foretop, falling carelessly upon its edge. His features open and manly ; and although of a serious cast, yet apparently ready for a smile. From the crown of his head to the buckle that glistened on his polished shoe, there was a perfect harmony in the whole.

If the young man was struck with the appearance of the reverend gentleman into whose presence he had been ushered, equally so was the latter with the gentlemanly address and pleasant countenance of the youth. He was somewhat excited, and the colour that mantled his cheeks just then could hardly be said to be natural ; his dark hair, almost a raven black, offered a strong contrast to the high, pale forehead from which it was thrown carelessly back, and his keen black eye had an expression of sadness, not usual at the light-hearted age of eighteen. The very easy and benevolent manner in which he was received at once removed the embarrassment manifest on his entrance.

"I address the Rev. Mr. Wharton, I presume, sir." Mr. Wharton bowed low. "If you will excuse the liberty of a perfect stranger, I wish to make a trifling inquiry ; I am in search for a house in some country village, as a place of residence for my mother and two sisters, and although there is no one here with whom we are acquainted, yet, from what I have learned of the place, I think my mother will be satisfied with it. I have, therefore, taken the strange liberty of making an application to you. Is there a probability, sir, that I could procure a place ?"

Mr. Wharton did not reply immediately, but, turning

his eye from the young man, it met that of his lady, who at once put down her knitting.

"If the white cottage was only good enough, Mr. Wharton?"

He shook his head. "It would hardly answer, my dear, for a family that had been accustomed to city life."

"If the house, sir, is only at such a convenient distance from the place of worship, so that my mother could walk there, we should not be particular about other things, for it is from motives of economy that we are about to change our residence."

Mr. Wharton looked steadily at the youth as he said this, and his heart began to warm towards him; he had been struck with his personal appearance on his entrance, and this acknowledgement of straitened circumstances, made so off-hand and manly, excited at once his noble and generous mind; his countenance assumed immediately that blandness which was its most natural expression, and the tones of his voice were softened as he replied:

"There can be no objection on the score of its distance from our place of worship, and I think, with a few trifling repairs, it might answer your purpose. But we shall not be able to visit the place this evening; make yourself at home with us to-night, and in the morning I shall be happy to accompany you to it."

The young man arose, and bowing politely, "I could not think, sir, of thus encroaching upon your hospitality. I have left my horse at the tavern, and feel that I have taken a great liberty in even making the inquiries I have."

"By no means, by no means, sir. And if you have no particular objections, I should rather esteem it a favour,

than otherwise, for there are many questions I wish to ask about the city, and a visitor from there is a treat at this season of the year."

"Your horse will probably fare better than you would; our tavern is not just what we could wish, so you must permit me to add my earnest request to my husband's, and besides, you know, as a lady, I may be indulged in a little curiosity. If we are to be neighbours, it is right that we should get somewhat acquainted."

The young man could not resist this united plea; he blushed deeply, and seemed hesitating as to the propriety of resuming his seat, when Mrs. Wharton, smiling in her most winning manner, continued: "You know visitors are not apt to be so plenty as when the warm weather drives our friends from the city, and perhaps you may be acquainted with some of them?"

"I fear not, madam. Since our residence in the city, circumstances have prevented us from forming acquaintances; we scarcely can be said to have made any."

"Then you have not been long in New York?"

"But three years, madam."

The storm now commenced in earnest, and beat furiously against the windows; the prospect without was cheerless indeed, and the young man began to congratulate himself that he was not exposed to its fury on the road. The strong contrast, too, which the scene within presented, was not lost upon him, and in spite of his feelings, as a stranger in a strange place, he began to enjoy the tokens of comfort with which he was surrounded. The cheerful fire blazed briskly, in the Franklin stove; illuminating its black and polished sides, and showing the little figures

with which it was ornamented in all their glossy beauty, while from the brazen andirons and fender, and tongs and shovel, and from every little hook and knob, were bright rays dancing off and enlivening the hearth-scene. And, as he cast his eye around, every article of furniture, whether of wood, brass, marble, or silver, was throwing off from its bright surface the lively, dancing light which the crackling blaze sent forth.

There are spots in this varied world of ours, like oases in the desert, where sweet sights, sweet odours, and sweet sounds, throw upon the senses their united influence, charming the wearied spirit to repose, causing it to forget the trials of the past, and renewing its strength for the onward struggle.

To many a wearied sojourner had this humble dwelling proved a resting-place for the heart. The neatness and order that were displayed, even in the most trifling matters, the air of calm and dignified enjoyment that was so manifest in the countenances and deportment of that reverend pair, the spirit of love that flowed forth in words, and tones, and manners, perfuming like the breath of spring the very atmosphere around them all, like a potent spell, entranced the spirit, hushed its angry heavings, and soothed it into humility and peace.

To this youth such an influence was all powerful; he felt it stealing over him each moment in sweeter and stronger bands. The world looked brighter to him than it had done for months or years.

"Excuse me," said Mr. Wharton, "did I understand aright? is your name Edwards?"

Mr. Wharton had been walking about the room, as was

his custom, and looking out occasionally upon the driving storm; while his lady, in her mild and pleasant way, was drawing out from the young man such relations of his family, as were consistent with delicacy, and a strong desire to know more of those, whose representation had made such a favourable impression on her mind.

"Yes, sir, James Edwards." Mr. Wharton took his seat, and eyed the youth with an earnestness that was almost painful to him.

"And did you say that your father came from the South? from what part of the South?"

"From North Carolina, sir."

"May I ask you his first name?"

"John T. Edwards, of Pine Grove."

Mr. Wharton laid his hand on the shoulder of the young man.

"Are you a son of John T. Edwards? Was your father ever at Yale College?"

"He was there, sir, two years; but I have heard him say that, at the death of my grandfather, he was obliged to return home, and take charge of the estate."

Mrs. Wharton had laid down her knitting, and seemed to be equally excited with her husband, as though some strange development were at hand.

"Mr. Wharton, can it be? is it so? that this is a son of your old friend?"

"My dear son," said Mr. Wharton, taking the hand of the youth in both of his, "is it so? Yes, it must be, I see your father's bright eye and raven hair; how has this come about? Who has directed you to me? Welcome, a thousand times welcome."

Young Edwards was deeply affected; a rich glow suffused his naturally pale features, and he returned the cordial greeting of Mr. Wharton with a warmth that showed how much his heart felt this unexpected recognition by one who had been his father's friend.

There were now a thousand questions to be asked and answered, and the calm, blue eye of Mr. Wharton was more than once suffused with a tear as he listened to the recital of the dark trials which had clouded the latter years of one whose youth was so bright and prosperous.

"You can little imagine, my dear young friend, what feelings this interview excites. Did you never hear your father mention an act of kindness which he did for a classmate when in college?"

"No, sir, never."

"That would be just like him. He was a noble-hearted man, but his true character was understood by very few. Did he retain in his later years a peculiar hauteur in his intercourse with strangers?"

"He was very reserved, sir, to all with whom he was not on terms of closest intimacy, and even in his family, had we not all known that his feelings of affection were of the strongest, most tender kind, his peculiar manner might have been misunderstood."

"Exactly so; he did not probably have many associates?"

"I may almost say none, sir."


"So I should have expected; and yet, perhaps, no man ever possessed a warmer heart, or one more susceptible to the strongest ties of friendship; the first time that I saw him was about one week after he took his seat in the

class at college; we were in the same division of the class, and were seated together; there was something in his appearance that attracted my notice, although his cold and formal bow, as he took his place beside me at recitation, without the slightest relaxing of his stern countenance, and the dogged staidness of his deportment, affected me rather unpleasantly, and was in such strong contrast with those on either side of us, that for some time I felt his presence to be irksome. I judged him to be extremely sensitive, and was, therefore, constantly in dread lest the thoughtless, though good-natured levity of those immediately about us might produce an outbreak on his part, that would inevitably bring on him the ill-will of all. Forming the opinion I did of him, and which happened to be a correct one, I presume my manner towards him was regulated thereby; and I did not fear him, for we were about equal as scholars, but I studiously avoided, from feelings of delicacy, whatever might give him dissatisfaction. I also noticed that, as he shunned society, others also avoided him. He was alone in the midst of the multitude."

James was looking intently at Mr. Wharton, listening with thrilling interest to the peculiarities in his father's early life, when the last remark deeply affected him.

"And that may be said of him, especially for these few past years; my father—"

But the endearing name was yet too tender a remembrance, under his present state of excitement. He could proceed no farther. Mrs. Wharton's sympathising heart was fully waked up, the more so as she perceived the manly efforts of the youth to suppress the strong feelings that were struggling for vent.



"Of course I never intruded myself upon him, but, as my own circumstances kept me from engaging in many of the frivolities of college life, and in some measure to seek retirement, I fancied, at times, that Mr. Edwards felt more complacently towards myself than he did to any others. On one occasion, I remember, he invited me to his room, and once or twice he did me the honour to seek my assistance in a difficult problem; to me he was civil and gentlemanly; to others distant, though polite.

"In our second year, a sudden blow came upon me. My father was utterly ruined in business, and I received information that I must return home, and seek some other calling. It was a moment of agony. I had maintained somewhat of a distinguished station in the class. I was intensely anxious to complete my course; all other employment appeared like drudgery of the most painful kind, and, to crown my calamity, I was in arrears to a considerable amount, not having for the last term received any remittances, and the letter which had just come to hand contained only money sufficient to pay my expenses home.

"Disappointed, mortified, and almost hopeless, I shut myself up and made apologies of indisposition for non-appearance at recitations. Many of my class-mates dropped into my room in the course of the day, but to none of them could I unbosom myself, and when the evening began to close in, I was almost in a frantic state. There was a gentle tap at my door—your father entered—a kindly smile was visible to me. He accosted me in friendly tones, such as, until then, I should never have expected from him. He had seen, at the first glance, that some trouble was upon me.

“ ‘I am not apt,’ said he, ‘to intrude myself upon my friends—nor do I wish to do so now; but excuse me for inquiring if some peculiar trouble does not at present agitate you?’ ”

“There was so much sincerity in his whole manner, that I could not resist the impulse, and at once unburdened my mind. He said but little, yet the few sentences he uttered went to my heart. After remaining a short time he left me, and very soon the porter of the college handed me a letter. It was from your father. It contained not more than half a dozen lines, merely informing me that the inclosed amount was what he could spare with perfect convenience, until such time as I might be able to return it. It contained two hundred dollars.”

The trembling tones in which Mr. Wharton closed his narrative, showed with what deep feelings he had treasured up this generous act. Young Edwards arose and walked to the window; his soul was on fire. He knew his father's noble spirit. The world had never known him; it had looked coldly upon him, but his ear had heard the living testimony of one who realised his worth, and had felt his generosity.

The fountains burst forth; they had been sealed, even to his heart's bitter aching, in the presence of the multitude, but now they would not be restrained; and other tears were flowing fast, than those of that devoted, noble boy; and love, pure and true, was gushing forth its feelings, and the heart of him who came there as a stranger, was made to feel the joy, the comforting assurance of strong and enduring friendship.

CHAPTER IV.

It is an easy matter with a few dashes of a pen, even a poor one, to accomplish a mighty deal of work, to change residences, build houses, set people in love, get them into trouble and out of it ; but each operation, in its actual performance, has many concomitants ; many agents must be employed, and as one event in this shifting life either leads to another or has proceeded from another, it will not always answer to dash on from point to point in the story of human affairs without sometimes entering into particulars, both of character and agency, that we may see more clearly the mutual dependence of effect and cause.

When such an operation as the removal of a family into the country is to be performed, it cannot be accomplished without time and patience, or, at least, it could not be at the time when the scenes which my story narrates took place.

It was then, and is now, a very easy matter to send for a carman, and order him to take certain articles down to a certain slip, and place them on board a certain vessel, bound to such a place, and to sail, wind and weather permitting, on such a day. But the sailing of said vessel,


and the time she would reach the place of her destination, were very doubtful matters forty years ago.

James had, at the urgent request of Mr. and Mrs. Whar-ton, taken his mother and sisters immediately to the par-sonage. It was a sweet relief to their torn and sensitive spirits to exchange the city, with its associations, now so painful to them, for that quiet resting-place ; amid warm and congenial feelings to enjoy the sweets of sympathy, and revel in the interchange of pure and exalted friend-ship, to hold communion with those whose hearts opened wide to receive them, to talk of him whose clouded day had passed, but whose memory was embalmed in thoughts that blessed his noble spirit.

There is in every village, almost without exception, some one active and stirring body, whose business it seems to be to do up all the odds and ends that must be done by somebody.

Generally, this personage is one upon whom his own cares and duties hang rather loosely. He keeps a pair of wild, daring horses, and is ever on the drive, from "pillar to post," and seldom home but at meal times.

The village in question, however, was served in this respect by a very different sort of character. Mr. Timothy Tightbody kept the only store in the place. He was a man well to do in the world. He had worked his way from very small beginnings to quite a respectable station in society. Early in life he had left his home by the bonnie banks of Doon, and acting ever on the principle, that "mony mickles mak a muckle," had found himself at length able to purchase his present stand and stock of goods.



Mr. Timothy Tightbody carried his economical, thriving principles into his new business, and as he took good care of his shop, that, very soon, began to take good care of him. He was a thickset little man, of rather prepossessing countenance, with a sprightly way of speaking, and just enough of Scottish accent to give piquancy and force to it. He was well versed in all the proprieties of life, and had a winning way with him, that took well with all classes. To Mr. Wharton, he failed not to pay the utmost deference, being always the first to aid in such duties as the parish owed to their minister, and punctually attendant upon all the services of the Sabbath. How far the spiritual advice of the good pastor was attended to by Mr. Timothy, we will not pretend to say; but he was always in his seat, never slept during the sermon, and was sure to be just opening his pew door as Mr. Wharton passed down the aisle; and there was then such a cordial grasping of the hand, and such earnest inquiries after the health of Mr. W. and his good lady, as was quite a lesson to all who witnessed it.


Mr. Timothy was, just now, a widower, and, as he often said, "had neither chick nor child." A young man that assisted him in the store; an old coloured woman who kept his house, with a "young black varmint," as he called a negro boy, that was for ever committing some blunder, constituted his household.

Mr. Timothy had a pair of fine horses, and a very respectable barouche, in which he sometimes flourished on extra occasions. But the barouche was seldom drawn out of its resting-place; a good lumber waggon served his turn, generally, and like all Mr. Timothy's establish-

ment, was turned by him to very good account. It served to bring and carry goods from and to the landing, which, being at some distance from the centre of the village, it became a matter of great convenience to that vicinity.

Mrs. Edwards' goods had been placed on board a sloop, and were daily expected. Mr. Timothy had been applied to by Mr. Wharton for aid in bringing them to the white cottage the moment the vessel should arrive. Mr. Timothy had also called and conversed with Mrs. Edwards on the subject. He had seen her two lovely daughters, and had made one of the most polite bows which he ever remembered to have made, as he took his leave. Mr. Timothy was much elated; it was an era in his being. Never before had he come in contact with such feminine sweetness; and many animating thoughts excited his rather susceptible heart. "These were to be his neighbours;" "he would doubtless have many opportunities of doing them a kindness:" "he would have the privilege of waiting upon them at his thriving establishment, measuring off yards of ribbon, and supplying *et ceteras* of nice things, such as would be suitable for persons of their standing." For, although Mr. Timothy knew of their reduced circumstances, yet he was a man who strongly believed in degrees of rank in this lower world, which depended not on the mere dollars and cents. High, very high on the scale did he place the widow and her daughters. The son he had not yet seen.

Time brings along events at last, and so, in days long gone by, sloops would get to their port of destination, but oftentimes not without a sad wear upon the patience. In the present instance the delay was a matter of small



moment to the good people at the parsonage, either to the visitors or their obliged entertainers, for the latter certainly appeared to feel, and doubtless did so, that the favour was all done to them. It was a sunny hour to them all; one of friendship's holy communion, where hearts were opened in their truth and beauty, and sweetly read by each, until, in one strong bond of love, they were fastened for the rest of life.

But Mr. Timothy, to use a homely phrase, "was on the tenter-hooks;" day after day had he watched, with an eagle eye, for the white sail of the long-expected craft; and when it was at length seen, winding its tortuous way through the long stretch of meadows, he found that it was too late in the afternoon to hope that his important commission could be accomplished until the following morning.

Mr. Timothy was an early riser, and tried hard to bring his "family" into the same commendable habit; but old Bet was never in a hurry to go to bed, and equally as disinclined to use expedition in the morning. Pomp was always ready with his "yes, massa" as soon as he was called, but it often amounted to nothing further until the same call had been repeated some several times. This morning Mr. Tightbody had, however, succeeded in getting Master Pomp to his "wide awake senses" just as the grey dawn was tinging the eastern sky. It was not very light in the stables, but, as everything there was kept in its right place, it mattered not.

"Oh, you precious villain, see here!" Mr. Tightbody made this exclamation on passing by the side of his favourite horse, and feeling his head gear. "You rascal, how is this? You imp of the old one, look here; the


whole blessed night has the poor beast been standing on his legs!"

Master Pomp made his appearance from under the other horse, and letting his under lip fall, stared somewhat wildly at his master.

Pomp was rather an odd-looking specimen of humanity, somewhere between seventeen and thirty years of age; it being a difficult matter to determine, by looking at him, to which of the periods he ought to be assigned. He was short, and rather thickset, with very large features; his eyes, and nose, and mouth, and the whole apparatus of a head, seemed to have been designed for a tall frame. The first impression on a stranger was, that he was on his knees, or had lost his legs. He was, however, to use his own expressive term, "a whole nigger;" the body, legs, and arms were all there, and the head part and parcel of the concern.

Pomp was verily confounded; he saw the dilemma in which the poor horse had been, but not the most distant recollection had he of having done the deed.

"He's been playing me a trick," was Pomp's next thought. Pomp had a strong religious belief, but it was all of the dark kind. It affected him when in the dark. The spirits in whose power he believed were dark spirits; he never expected any help from them, his only idea being that their chief aim was to do him a mischief, or, as he said, to "git a poor nigger into trouble." All the evil that happened to him he charged to their account; all his wrong-doings, especially if found out, he laid upon their shoulders; and if at any time an extraordinary event took place which brought him into trouble, without his being



able to see exactly how he was to blame for it, he had a ready solution for the difficulty.

"*He's* been a playin' me a trick." Who Pomp meant by *He*, was best known to himself. He never spoke his name, but evidently considered him Captain-General of evil doers and evil doings.

"Don't look at me, you thundergust; look here at your doings; the horse tied tight to the ring of the rack, and not a bit could he lie down the blessed night! Ain't you a precious villain? and won't I finger you!"

Pomp was somewhat startled by the tones of his master's voice; the names he called him by, being rather household terms, were matters of indifference to him; the tones were decidedly sharp. Pomp pulled hard upon the wool; he must do something to start the ideas; he began to remember a little of what had passed the previous day.

"Me, massa, me—no, no—me no 'member tyin' Tom dat way—somebody else. Me no 'member 'bout it, massa, 'tall—when Tom come home last night?"

Mr. Timothy's ideas began to collect themselves. He had been out late with the horse; he had called at Mr. Wharton's, and he now remembered having put the horse in the stable himself, not caring to disturb the slumbers of Master Pomp, who was, after all, quite a pet with his master.

Why he had fastened the beast in such an unusual manner was, however, beyond the clear comprehension of the good man.

Mr. Timothy had, for a few days past, begun to hold his own head up. He was anxious to appear to the best advantage, to make the most of himself. Perhaps some

such thoughts were passing his mind while tying his steed; he was much puzzled, however, to account for the act.

The recollection of matters at once softened his feelings towards Pomp.

"Well, Pomp, never mind it now, my boy; finish cleaning the horses, and give them a good polish, do you hear?"

"Yes—will—massa."

Pomp was again at his work, rubbing away for dear life.

There are some days in this chequered life of ours when everything goes with a hitch and a check. It generally happens on some busy day; we seem to be under the influence of nightmare. We would go very fast; the urgency of the case demands it, but we are constantly meeting with pull-backs, and often, under such circumstances, the faster we drive the less speed we make.

This may be set down as one of Mr. Tightbody's unlucky days; there were unexpected hindrances continually coming up, but he had finally overcome all obstacles, and was ready for a start. And, as he expected to have considerable handling to do, Master Pomp was summoned as an accompaniment.

It was rather a cool morning, and Pomp was chilly; he had therefore "saw to it," and arrayed himself in an outer coat, which had been in its day a plump little garment, that fitted well to the person of his master. It looked rather baggish on the present wearer, but it suited the head. Pomp was not particular; he had turned the cuffs up to let his hands out, and it offered no obstruction to the full play of the legs. Mr. Tightbody was about to object to



the singular appearance which his valet made, but Pomp stowed himself away in the bottom of the waggon, and, as his head only was visible, was allowed to pass muster.

His own person Mr. Timothy had attended to with more than usual care; he might, in the course of the morning, see some "good company," and he wished to appear as a man should.

Never did the horses behave better; they held their heads up as though the spirit of their master possessed them; and as they passed the Parsonage put on some of their best airs, so that Mr. Timothy had much ado to restrain their excited feelings. After passing the mansion which just then affected the little man with so much interest, the horses' heads were gracefully turned from the highway into a narrow road which led directly to the landing. They had proceeded but a short distance, probably a quarter of a mile, when, by some caper, one of the horses got his head under his fellow's rein. By dint of much pulling and coaxing, Mr. Tightbody succeeded in bringing them to a halt, and Pomp was ordered out to fix things straight.

As I have said, this was one of Mr. Timothy's unlucky days.

Wishing to return two empty flax-seed casks by the sloop from which he was to receive the goods, he had placed them in the waggon. Being a careful man, the heads had been replaced as soon as the casks were emptied, and, as Mr. Tightbody said, were as tight as a drum. On one of these casks he had packed himself, and had felt, not only quite elevated, but perfectly secure.

Just as Pomp had succeeded in putting things to rights,

and was leaving the horses' heads, he heard a slight noise, and turned quickly towards the waggon.

"My golly!"

Pomp looked around him on every side, but no master was to be seen; he stuck his arms akimbo, dropped his under-jaw, and opened his eyes to their widest stretch. He was utterly confounded.

"My golly! where massa?"

A deep, hollow call reached his ear—

"Help—help—Pomp—quick!"

"He's got him! My golly! massa gone case!"

Pomp started off to one side of the road; again the voice called: it seemed further off still—

"Pomp, Pomp, help! help!"

Pomp could stand it no longer. The sudden disappearance of his master; the call for help, as if from under ground, all convinced him of the catastrophe. His turn might be next.

"Massa gone case, sure 'nuf."

Pomp's legs had full play, and they travelled off with a speed equal to the extremity of the case.

Mr. Tightbody had not gone lower than the bottom of the flax-seed cask; it was, however, low enough, in the position that he entered it, to hide all that was mortal of him. The tallest among us would make but small show in the world doubled up like a slapjack, and could be stowed away in no very large apartment; but Mr. Tightbody was not tall, as I have said. Once in, he was fully absorbed, and as helpless as Jonah in the whale's belly. The horses were restless beasts, and no sooner was Pomp away from their heads, and well on his race, than they

started likewise. Mr. Tightbody felt that they were going, and might, firmly anchored as he was, have held on to the reins with a tight purchase. But here was a difficulty, he had but one hand at liberty; the other happened to be, at the moment of his descent, in a hind pocket, and there it had to remain, and the reins had been slackened, the better to assist Master Pomp in fixing the horses. He felt them gathering speed; in fact, they were taking matters into their own hands, or heels, and where he or they would land was an uncertainty, not very pleasant to anticipate; he knew that the road he was upon soon led over two bridges that crossed the creek in its windings, and neither of them protected by railings; and he thought of many things that are apt to be kept out of mind in the common run of life. In fact, there was a rush of feeling, such as the poor man had never experienced before.

Just as Pomp started on his race, a young man sprang over the fence from an adjoining field, and made rapid bounds towards the waggon. He had witnessed the scene through an opening in the bushes that lined the road, but had not been observed by either Pomp or his master. Fearing if he attempted to seize the horses' heads he should give them an alarm that would only increase the difficulty, he made directly for the hind end of the waggon; he was within a few feet, and grasped at the hind-board, but a sudden spring of the horses took it beyond his reach.

"Help, help! I'm a dead man! Pomp, help, quick."

Excited by the cries from the helpless man, the youth made a desperate effort; he felt that the life of a human


being depended upon his success. One leap more, and he seized the board; his feet in an instant flew from under him, for the horses were at their speed; but his grasp was strong and his arm nerved with the vigour of youth, and the desire to rescue the sufferer from his deadly peril; a few efforts more and he was within, and the reins grasped by a skilful hand. Without any fear himself, he soon managed to calm the apprehensions of the beasts, who were beginning to be alarmed at their unrestrained speed. As soon as he had brought them to a halt, he cast his eye down upon the sufferer, who also looked up piteously to him. They were strangers to each other.

"The blessing of all things be upon you, for a brave heart and a true hand. I was a dead man but for your aid, my young gentleman."

"Have a little further patience, my good sir, until I untackle the horses, for they are much excited."

It was the work of but a few moments, for the young man was no novice at such business. The horses were released from the waggon and fastened to the fence, and a fair prospect was now opened for the deliverance of Mr. Tightbody. Many expedients were thought of by both parties, and the only feasible one seemed to be that of rolling the cask on its side, with its cargo of humanity, and by some means, not very obvious just then, helping him to work his way out.

Mr. Tightbody found it no easy thing, with all the assistance the young man could give him, the work of the latter being to keep the head and feet as near together as possible until the whole carcass had been withdrawn, when he lay stretched straight out upon the bottom of the



waggon, taking long breaths and making sundry short exclamations, the purport of which were not very easily defined. Starting up, finally, from his prostrate position, he cast his eye around, as if to take the bearings of his whereabouts, and speaking very deliberately,

"Can you tell me, my young gentleman, have you seen anything of a black varmint that was by the horses when this spree came on?"

"I saw something black, sir," said the young man, smiling, "making rapid strides towards the village; he has probably gone for help."

"The black scoundrel! and a pretty story he'll make of it. But may I take the liberty of asking the name of one who has been so serviceable to me? you must be a stranger, I take it, in these parts?"

"I am a stranger, sir, having but recently come to the village; my name is Edwards—James Edwards."

Mr. Timothy was utterly confounded; what an unfortunate circumstance! but he must make the best of it.

"Edwards! What! not a son of that excellent lady who is about to settle among us?"

"I am the son of Mrs. Edwards, sir, and am very happy that, in my ramble over the fields, I happened to be in this vicinity, and thereby so fortunate as to be of service to one to whom our family will be neighbours."

"And right proud and happy am I, sir, in the prospect of such an event, and shall hope to prove my gratitude to you, my young gentleman, before we've done with one another. I am not the man to forget a kind act. Will you ride to the landing with me, Mr. Edwards? it's a fine morning, and the beasts are in good heart."

"I was on the point of asking the favour, sir. Your servant, I believe, is returning; at least, I think yonder is the boy who left you so suddenly."

Mr. Timothy answered not; he looked in the direction to which the young man pointed, satisfied himself, doubtless, as to the identity of Master Pomp, and also of the fact that he had been for help, for a man was walking beside him, and both were making haste towards the waggon; and then springing to the horses, began with all haste to tackle them.

The surprise of Pomp on beholding his master in the breathing world, safe and sound, was very manifest in his bewildered look. It was all hocus-pocus to him; but he said nothing, for his master had given him an expressive shake of the head, as much as to say, "Very well, my gentleman, you've done it; never mind."

Mr. Tightbody was well acquainted with the person whom Pomp had brought along, and he was one to whom he felt little inclined to be under obligations. He, therefore, assumed a very indifferent air, as though nothing had happened, called Pomp to "jump in," cracked his whip, and was off, leaving the man in no little astonishment at the whole affair.

The ride was as agreeable now as a ride could be. Mr. Tightbody became quite enamoured with his new acquaintance, for James had not only proved himself a skilful manager of horses, but when work was on hand, manifested a readiness to take hold that was very satisfactory to the mind of Mr. Tightbody; and a few days after, in speaking of him to a person of some consequence in the village, he did it with much emphasis.

“He’s a true gentleman born and bred, that any man can see; and he is not afraid nor ashamed to put his shoulder to the work when it is on hand to do.”

As things go, this opinion of Mr. Tightbody was of some consequence, and it may prove so to our hero.

CHAPTER V.

THERE are many noble sentiments cherished in the heart, which are never brought to light in real life, because the energy necessary to carry them into effect is wanting. A few untoward circumstances are, in most cases, sufficient to dampen the zeal and put an end to the finest suggestion.

To quit ourselves like men in the great contest on the field of life, we must keep our eye fixed on the goal to which our hopes aspire, amid all the obstacles that obstruct our way, and through all the windings to which necessity compels us.

James Edwards had accomplished one part of the plan in reference to his mother and sisters. He had procured for them a dwelling in a retired, country village, and he had attended them to their new abode, and assisted in arranging the few articles of furniture, which they had reserved from the general sale. He had introduced them to kind friends, and when he left them to seek a living for himself and them, rich were the tokens of love he had received from those dear ones of his heart, and strong was his confidence, that he should soon send tidings of good to relieve their anxiety, and prove his ability to accomplish what his true heart had devised.

Those of my readers who have been long acquainted with the city of New York, will remember, in the upper part of what was once Sugar-loaf street, some distance from Broadway, houses were not quite as plenty as they now are. And perhaps, on a fine afternoon in the fall of the year, some of them may have taken a game of ball there, and sometimes have been obliged to climb over the piles of boards, which belonged to a lumber-yard near by, in search for the missile, which some unlucky blow had sent in the wrong direction.

Near to this lumber-yard stood a small wooden building, back from the street, and almost hidden by a high board fence running parallel with it, and on a range with the two-story brick houses, which commenced at some distance from Broadway. In this fence was a gate or door, generally open, and the passer-by would be almost sure to give a second look at the rural aspect of the place attracted his eye; for there were a few shrubs scattered around, and the premises were always neat and orderly. Over the gate was a little tin sign, bearing the inscription, "Boots and shoes mended here by J. Upjohn."

As the dwelling-house in which Mr. Edwards lived was not far from the described premises, James had become acquainted with the family by stepping in occasionally to take advantage of the handiwork of Mr. Upjohn.

The pleasant manners of the boy won the good will of the old man, and often when at leisure, James found it an agreeable place to stop and chat for an hour. He was always made so welcome, and there was such an air of

comfort by the fireside of this little family, and each one had so much to say to him in their homely, pleasant way, that, with the exception of his own home, he knew no place so agreeable.

Mr. Upjohn was a native of New Jersey—a plain, unassuming, sensible man, who worked diligently through the day, but who would, for no consideration, put his hand to his awl after candle-lighting; he was fond of reading, and fond of arguing, and sometimes a little too positive in expressing an opinion, and then in adhering to it; but with something of a bluntness of manner, not always agreeable, he possessed a kindness and gentleness of heart, which few could boast. His wife was an amiable, soft-hearted, soft-spoken woman, with a pleasant countenance, upon which there could always be seen the light of a smile. Besides this couple, there was but one other member of the family—a niece—without parents or other kindred nearer than those, who had taken her as their own. They loved her tenderly, but perhaps not wisely. Gertrude had some wild ways with her, which should have been corrected when a child, and now they might have been remedied by a little care; but the good folks did not realise that there was anything out of the way.

“Gitty was a thought giddy; but she was only a child.”

She was sixteen, however, and rather tall of her age; marks of beauty were already developing, and gave promise of more than a usual share of that dangerous attendant. Her flaxen hair had, indeed, been too light to please the fancy of many, but it was evidently as-

suming a browner tinge. It curled, one would have thought, quite enough, naturally, but Gitty helped it along a little. It still lay in a childish manner around her ears, and down upon her shoulders. Whatever "fixing" it had certainly evidenced much taste; her features were well made, forming an open, joyous countenance, and her complexion was pure and bright.

The kindness of Mr. Upjohn during the sickness and death of Mr. Edwards has already been noticed; and when James returned to the city, and called according to his promise, he was welcomed with all the warm-hearted interest of near relatives.

"And now, Master James, I hope you will not take it amiss, that I ask you to tarry with us; we are poor folks, to be sure, but what we have, you are heartily welcome to, and wife can fix you a place to sleep in, not quite so good as you have been accustomed to, but it will be clean, that I'll warrant, and may be you will rest as well in it, as in some grander place."

As Mr. Upjohn said this, his wife laid down her needle-work, took her spectacles off, and, with a look of earnestness, while a smile played over her honest countenance, spoke as truly as looks could speak, that she heartily agreed to all her husband had said; while Gitty pulled one of her long curls, and blushed, and manifested by many restless signs, that it also met her decided approbation.

James felt the kindness of the offer; and the colour that mantled his pale cheek, and the moistening of his bright eye, clearly indicated how much he was affected by it. A moment he looked at the honest pair in silence, and they,

the first of the year.

He was now standing as it as

the first of the year.

He was now standing as it as

the first of the year.

He was now standing as it as

the first of the year.

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into a glow of love. At the very threshold, as he stepped forth into the wide world of strangers, he had been met by a generous sympathy. It was a bright world; he knew it was; there might be dark spots in it, but it was much better than many said it was, better than he himself had thought it. And as he left those humble friends, and walked, with elastic step, to his new place of abode, kind faces seemed to smile upon him, and generous hearts seemed ready to pour out their fulness for him, in all the hurrying multitude that passed him on his way.

CHAPTER VI.

gaily power within the fresh, young heart,
 young chief of Macedon, the youth, with
 ventures forth upon an untried region,
 with an inspiring banner, with scarce the meagre
 that hero had. Well for him will it be, if,
 and sunny hour of life, he meets not with
 storms, which often sweep across the track
 travel: when his heart will quiver at the
 blood-red tempest, and his limbs falter
 of the poisoned air, and his banner,
 his grasp, go with the roaring wind, and, on the
 himself lie down, a hopeless human wreck.
 such there are. We meet them in our daily walk.
 of them in our daily tidings from the busy
 We heave a sigh, perhaps, or drop a tear, and
 on.

situation, such as James sought for, is not so
 obtained as persons unacquainted with the city are
 to imagine. Interested friends and strong recom-
 mendations are often needed to place a young man where
 amount of salary is paid that would make it desirable;
 especially are these necessary when a stagnation of
 which has made clerks abundant and places scarce.

The pressure of such a trial to the mercantile community was felt in all its sad realities, with full as much severity as it had been for months past, and with the exception of the favoured few who were beyond the chances of trade, the mass was struggling amid difficulties that caused many a sleepless night, and many a sad and silent fireside.

"I wonder why it is, wife, that James,"—they all called him James, so much at home had he become at Mr. Upjohn's—"I wonder why it is that James has not been here for now more than two weeks?"

"I fear the poor child is getting discouraged; he seemed very much down-hearted when he was last here. I guess he finds it hard to get a place; and ain't you most afraid, husband, that he is spending all his money. Poor boy! you know he hadn't much."

"I met him last evening, aunt, or rather I passed him in Broadway; he looked very pale and thin. I was almost a mind to stop and speak to him, but I didn't."

Mr. Upjohn looked a moment rather sternly at Gitty, and then cast a significant glance towards his good woman, as much as to say—"There, wife, there's something about that you had better see into."

"And where did you say, Gitty, that you met him? in Broadway? I thought you was spending the evening at Lydia's."

"Well, so I was, aunt, but you see we girls got tired of sitting so still; the old folks, you know, are rather dull, and we wanted a little run."

"What! you two girls alone, Gitty?" and her uncle looked very soberly, as he said this, into the bright fire.

Gitty gave her head a toss, just to throw the curls back where she would have them.

"Oh, you know, uncle, Mr. Jones was with us; he stepped in to see Lydia."

Alas, poor uncle! he knew nothing about it; but Gitty smiled so sweetly at him, and put her arm so playfully upon his shoulder, that whatever severe thing he may have designed to say was at once suppressed.

"Be careful, Gitty, be careful. Jones, did you say? what Jones?"

"Oh, how should I know, uncle! but Lydia knew him, you see. He seems to be a clever fellow, any how. I felt very sorry, though, about James, and meant to have spoken to you about him." Gitty was very anxious just then to turn the thoughts of her guardian away from herself.

"I think, papa," Mrs. Upjohn frequently gave this title to her husband for the reason, perhaps, that there were no little ones to call him so, "I think, papa, you had better go down to-morrow and see about him."

"Not to-morrow, wife; there is too much work on hand, and I've promised it to be done; but there! some one has opened the gate; perhaps he is coming now."

A gentle tap at the outer door was immediately recognised as his, and Gitty arose at once to admit him.

"Ah, Mr. James, welcome, right welcome; take a seat. Gitty, that chair: how has it been with you? Draw your chair close to the fire, it's a chilly evening."

"We were just talking about you. I was saying to Mr. Upjohn that I wished he would walk down and see how you got along: do you know it is more than two weeks since you was here?"

James had, as yet, said nothing in answer to either of the good folks. He bowed politely to them, took the seat which Gitty placed for him, and, as Mr. Upjohn requested, drew it a little nearer to the corner. The bright light shone full upon him, and all present noticed the change which had passed upon his countenance. It was much paler than usual, and had almost a haggard look; had he passed through some great trouble, it could not have worn a more marked expression.

"You have not been well, Master James?"

"Yes sir, oh, yes, quite well; I had a slight cold, but it has passed off."

"It seems by the papers that times are dull among the merchants yet."

"So it appears, sir, very dull; many are failing, and all business seems to be at a stand; it looks dark ahead."

"How have you succeeded in getting a situation? found one to your mind yet?"

Mr. Upjohn asked this question in a rather indifferent manner; he had not much hope, from the aspect of things, that it could be answered in the affirmative, and although he was painfully anxious that it might, yet he wished to convey the idea that it was a matter hardly to be expected in so short a time and under existing circumstances; his kind heart prompted at once the thought that hope, encouragement, must ever be held up to the youthful mind; let these stimulants be withdrawn, and they are at the mercy of every difficulty. James answered in tones that spoke a stronger meaning than his words.

"Not yet sir, no; and I fear very much that I must give it up." Mr. Upjohn looked steadily at the fire,

TO LOVE AND TO BE LOVED.

...expressing any surprise or exhibiting any emotion ;
...clearly that the poor youth was under intense and
...feelings.

"I have heard as yet, sir, of very few situations ; I
...applied to each of them, but without success. In
...I have about given up ; one place I might, possibly,
...have obtained, but they wanted recommendations from
...some person with whom I had previously lived ; and that,
...you know—"

"True, true ; that might be a difficulty with some ; but
that is not such a serious one after all ; and, when the
times change, it will be different."

"I wish I had a good trade, Mr. Upjohn ; I would
hardly care what it was, if it would only afford me an
honest living."

"O Mr. James !" and the old lady put her spectacles
on the table, and clasped her hands together on her lap—
"how you do talk ! How would you look with an apron
on, and an awl in your hand, and a last strapped over
your knee ; or, may be, with a trowel dabbling in mortar,
or a plane and a saw ? You wasn't made for it."

"I was not brought up to any such employment, Mrs.
Upjohn, but perhaps it would be much better for me now
if I had been."

"Every one for their calling," said the old man, rising
and putting back a brand that had fallen on the hearth ;
"we've got to bide by that which we have been brought
up to. A trade is a good thing, that is, if a man sticks
to it. We must expect to live plain, to be sure ; but it
is my way of thinking, that it ain't much matter whether
we live in a big house or a small one, so as we bring our

mind to our means. A man can be very happy, even if he lives in a poor way. Two and twenty years I have worked on my bench—”

“That is, by daylight, uncle.”

“Yes, by daylight, you hussy, candle-light was never meant to work by; and, besides, I expect to make a life business of it; and a man wants something for his mind to feed on as well as his body; my evenings I like to spend with a book, or may be chatting with a friend. And I don’t know but I enjoy my fireside as much as some who live in grander style. But, as I was saying, two and twenty years I have worked steady, but moderately, at my trade, and we’ve lived comfortably in our way. Many whom I have known have gone up a good deal higher; and sometimes I have felt as though some other occupation would have been better; but when changes would come about, and people were tumbling down from their high places, and grey hairs were covering heads that were not so old as mine, then I have thought that my old seat was about as safe a one, and as easy a one as some others; but, as I was saying, we must follow our calling.”

“But what if there is no employment in that calling, Mr. Upjohn? and there seems to be none in mine, or none that I can live by working at.”

“Well, Mr. James, I apprehend your difficulty, but you are not alone. There always will be these reverses in business when things are all turned heels uppermost; merchants gloomy and sad, many of them broken to pieces and disheartened, and not knowing where to get bread for their families. It is a dark time now, very dark; I pity those who are standing on a pinnacle, not knowing

TO LOVE AND TO BE LOVED.

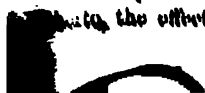
... plunged in the dark grief which lays
... them, but a man must put on a
... when the storms are about him, do
... our skies will come again."

... the reasoning of his old friend. It
... enough, but to his sad heart no encourage-
... moment that did not hold out the pros-
... relief, a place in which he could labour,
... for those dependent ones who had cast
... his feeble arm.

... and the truth may as well be told at once,
... reached a point in the state of his affairs at
... to come to a stand, and look forth in some
... for a path to follow. He had engaged
... public-house much frequented by merchants
... clerks; he had watched every new adver-
... and made application to each in turn; he had
... to become acquainted with young men already
... and who might possibly help him to a place,
... a vain. The small amount of money which had
... from the sale of the furniture had been much
... by the expense of removal, and the most of what
... left he had from necessity taken with him. Some
... had passed in his fruitless effort; and his funds
... reduced to so small an allowance that he had only
... to bear his expenses for another week.

Winter was at hand, too, with its frosts to chill the
... and dry up the streams of trade, already sluggish
... shallow.

He was possessed of strong, even violent feelings.
... the effect of them had been to nerve his heart



with the most engrossing tenderness to those upon whom his love was placed, and its outpourings had filled those dear ones with the fondest hopes, and the most affecting consolations.

But his very strength of feeling was now turning in upon himself, and working upon his sensitive spirit with a power, that would soon unfit him for the severe and manly struggle in which he had engaged.

It conjured up before him all the dark visions of the past, only to throw a deeper gloom upon the stern realities of the present. With a sad and desolate heart, he mingled with the busy multitude through the day, and retired at night to his sleepless bed, or to awake from troubled dreams to the consciousness of his dependent and unhappy condition.

No wonder if a change was so manifest on his youthful brow. Alas! dear youth, this is but a taste of the bitter cup. What, think you, would it be to wring out the dregs, and drink them?

There are more evils in this changing scene than your young heart has yet imagined; and yet there are sweet draughts, too, whose potent charms steal o'er the soul, entrancing it with pleasures beaming from a better world, and giving rich foretaste of what it may yet enjoy. The lights and the shadows, the sweet and bitter draughts, are appointed with a wiser aim, and for a better end, than our fancy fashions. While Mr. Upjohn was engaged in his homely way, giving true and manly advice, and endeavouring to cheer up the mind of young Edwards, Gitty had been stirring round to some purpose, and arranging things on a little table in the centre of the room.

"Come, Master James, draw up your chair. Gitty, you see, has been getting some nic-nacs for us ; that's the way with these girls, always throwing temptations in our way : move up, Master James, move up."

Gitty had, indeed, gathered quite a little variety of good things, and they were placed upon a snow-white cloth. There was a plate of large red apples, shining like rubies ; and a dish of Kiskatom nuts, well cracked, and showing abundance of rich meat, and another plate of plump, tempting dough-nuts, and a large pitcher of spruce beer, with the foam rising in a pyramid upon the top. Gitty's eyes, too, were sparkling with delight, and Mrs. Upjohn's needles flew with astonishing rapidity, while her husband almost allowed a smile to rest upon his rigid countenance.

Scarcely had they commenced partaking of these simple refreshments, when the little gate was heard to open, and soon there was quite a rap at the door.

Gitty, as was her custom, immediately caught a light from the table, and attended the summons. As she opened the door, a young gentleman, fashionably dressed, was standing on the step. He was evidently confounded for a moment ; Gitty began to think he had made some mistake, and was just putting on one of her pretty smiles, such as play around the mouths of these mischief-makers, when they find one of the sterner sex at fault.

The young man felt the awkwardness of his silence ; he saw the smile.

"Pardon me, Miss ; I was directed here from No. — street, as the place where I should, probably, learn something of James Edwards."

"He is here, sir ; will you please walk in ?"

James had heard his own name mentioned, and immediately stepped to the door. It was Rudolph Hunt.

The young men at once recognised each other.

"I have called on you, Mr. Edwards, to inquire whether you have yet procured a situation."

"I have not, sir; will you walk in?"

He accepted the invitation, with almost too much readiness quite to satisfy the delicate notions of Edwards, for he at once laid down his hat, and threw off his outer coat. James could not do less than introduce him to the little circle: he blushed deeply as he did so, however, and so did Gitty, who threw her curls back, and seemed for a time quite restless.

"I am glad to hear, Mr. Edwards, that you have not yet suited yourself, for my uncle seems now quite anxious to engage you. I say my uncle, for although they are both my uncles, you, no doubt, perceived the last time you called, that the difficulty was only with one of them."

"I should be very sorry if his objections, whatever they were, had been overruled by any—"

"Oh! it has all been of his own will, and I think if you will call to-morrow that an arrangement will be made satisfactory to you."

Reader, have you ever bowed down under the burden of care? has your spirit ever agonised beneath the load that was pressing upon it? has the curtain of night, not sweet starlight or sweet moonlight night, sparkling in beauty above, or spreading its mild loveliness in your path, or by your sleeping couch, but night, drear and fathomless, whose deep drapery has wrapped your soul in gloom, and filled it with uncertain horrors, ever enveloped; in such

darkness, have streaks of morning suddenly darted through the gloom, and from such a burden has some kind hand, in an unexpected moment, delivered your sinking frame, and administered a cordial balsam to your spirit?—then can you tell what change a few moments, a few short sentences have wrought upon the mind of this lone youth.

There was much lively chatting now around that humble board. Rudolph Hunt appeared quite at ease; he had much of the polish of the gentleman, but to Edwards, who had a keen sense of propriety, his freedom of manners was not agreeable, and, more than once, James felt the blush warming his cheek, at what he thought not entirely consistent with the conduct of one so lately a stranger. Gitty was, however, highly elated; it was a bright evening to her; but well for her, if it prove not the beginning of sorrow.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Mrs. Edwards bade adieu to James, as he left their new abode to seek his fortune in the great city, she put on a cheerful smile, and gave him such words of encouragement as she felt he needed for the serious undertaking upon which his mind was fixed. But her heart was sad; she indeed hoped much from his strong resolution, his industrious habits, and his virtuous character; but she knew more of the world than he could as yet possibly know. Hitherto he had not been beyond a parent's roof. He had not come in contact with those ensnaring influences which meet the young in our large cities, and draw so many into their resistless vortex. She, also, knew more of the difficulties which he might, and doubtless would, have to contend against. But his heart was full of hope, and she could not bear to quench its ardour, or to throw a shadow on that quickening beam. Still she had her fears, a mother's fears; they would come unbidden, and disturb her most peaceful moments. She knew that James had noble sentiments, strong filial love, and that hitherto his pure mind seemed to be unsullied by one dark spot; but how would he conduct himself when left without a guardian—when the sweet influence of mother and sisters would be wanting, and his ardent temperament should

come in contact with the allurements of the city? And what would life be worth to her now, should he prove recreant to the high character he had hitherto sustained? The trembling spirit could alone quiet its maternal anxieties, by casting the loved one upon the care of an unseen Protector. Delightful, however, to her mourning heart, was the change from the bustling city to the quiet and seclusion of the country. In the hey-day of life, in youth and prosperity, the city has its fascinations, but when we have tasted of the bitter cup, or have become wearied with chasing the retreating phantasies of life, there is no place like the country. Its noiseless beauties invite the soul toward its great Parent. The freshness of its pure breezes cools the burning brain and allays the fevered pulse; the bright loveliness of summer, the bursting life of spring, the waning tints of autumn, and even the storms of winter, all have a power of their own that speak to the heart, that strike its finest chords, and wake a melody there which lulls the sufferer to sweet repose.

There, too, the child of sorrow meets with that sweet sympathy from his fellow-man which in vain he looks for in the crowded mart. The rich man, who affects the pomp and show of city life, and thinks by the glitter of his wealth to claim that homage which obsequious multitudes have paid for the sake of his favour or his gold, may not meet with it. Farmers, in our happy land, tread freely on their own soil. They meet the city millionaire with an open brow, for they fear him not; and all his wealth could not purchase one single favour that would not be granted willingly to the most abject being that dwells in their neighbourhood. But to the downcast sufferer, from

whatever cause, there is ever a ready hand and a feeling heart amongst those who have been reared amidst the suns and storms, and free, pure air of the country. They have been trained to feel that when trouble was upon a neighbour, it was their business to be doing something. When the swift tempest, or the unsparing flame destroys the humble dwelling and the happy home, soon, like a Phoenix from its ashes, arises another and a better in its stead, the gift of many hands, poured forth willingly into the bosom of the unfortunate; and when the dark, walking Pestilence is abroad, and sickness and death do his bidding, no hireling watches around the death-bed; those who have been companions in the work-field, or together laughed lightly at the festive board, are watching with noiseless tread, within the sick chamber, administering with their own hands to every want and weakness; and when Death has done his work, they still are there performing the last sad offices, until the departed one is laid to rest in his long home. These, and a thousand nameless acts of love, beget a fellow-feeling of which those know nothing who live where money buys all service that we need, from the cradle to the grave.

Blest rural life! Thy homely fare, thy simple pleasures, thy manly toil, and thy calm retreats, may be despised by the flutterers in the thronged and splendid mart; but keep to thy plain and home-born virtues, maintain thy jealousy of pomp and state, nor ever covet the glittering tinsel that, at times, flashes across your quiet path: could you see the aching hearts it covers, you would love your inheritance the better.

Mrs. Edwards had been reared among the gay and

fashionable, but long had she withdrawn from these, and sought her joy alone in the smile of him to whom her heart was given. Her husband's home became her festal hall, and there she reigned sole queen of those she loved. That home has passed away, like all other visions, and now she finds herself the centre of deep responsibilities, and with a frail and uncertain prospect, even of a scanty subsistence. But the even tenor of her placid mind is undisturbed; with the same dignified and graceful step she walks within the lowly cottage as when she trod the stately mansion in former days. The same mild beauty sheds its loveliness around her, and the same soft tones fall sweetly on the ears of her children, or those new friends and neighbours whose constant kindnesses she experiences and warmly prizes.

The fruition of our hopes is often delayed, so far as we can judge, only to make the blessing more truly realised, and our hearts more happy.

A lonely winter day had just come to a close, and Mrs. Edwards and her daughters were surrounding their little table before the fire, and plying their busy needles.

"I fear, mother," said Mary, turning her full, lustrous eyes up from her work, "that James will be obliged to yield to stern necessity, and come home to us, disappointed and chagrined."

"It may be so, my dear; I have had my fears all along, and yet I cannot but hope he may be spared that trial."

"What would he do, dear mother? His mind has been so fixed, and his confidence so strong; oh! how I do feel for him. It is a terrible thing to be poor."

"It is not, my dear; a state of dependence involves in its contingencies scenes of deep and terrible suffering."

"I should feel it more, mother, to have brother come back disappointed, than if we were all obliged to live on a mere crust of bread and a drink of water."

"We all should, Julia, and it is such a trial, as that would be, which gives to coming poverty its sharpest pang; it is not the fear that we shall not have bread and water, or that the home which shelters us will be rude and small, but it is the crushing of fond hopes, the blasting of noble and just intentions, the disabling of a mind whose views are pure, from carrying out its grand idea, and accomplishing an exalted end."

"Mother, will you read his last letter again?"

There was no reply to this request, for a sudden rap at the front door put the little circle at once in a state of wonderment. It was a rap of such peculiar kind that each one instinctively exclaimed, "Who can it be?"

It was not the common rap of any of the neighbours. There was a flourish to it very unusual; first a loud rap with a little accompaniment, and then a long string of delicate touches, ending with one almost equal in volume to the first.

"I will soon see," said Julia, laying down her work and seizing a lamp from the table.

As the room in which they were sitting was somewhat removed, it was not easy to distinguish voices; but some one was chatting in a lively, pleasant way with Julia, and by laying aside his outer garment, was evidently intending quite a call.

Never did old Sol, when on some fair spring morning

his mild, broad disk arose upon our goodly earth, shine with more complacency than did the full, round face of Mr. Timothy Tightbody, as he stood in the door of the little room and bowed to the two ladies, who were still seated at the table, and indulging a very natural curiosity respecting the coming guest. From top to toe, he was in his best—an entirely new rig. A bottle-green coat of the newest cut, with small brass buttons, a bright buff vest, held together by three of the same kind of fastenings; a frill, broad and full, and with very small plaits, gracefully protruding, adorned the upper man; bottle-green nether garments, and well-polished boots, completed the array. Above all these, however, and to which, properly speaking, my figure of the sun was intended to apply, shone his full, round face. Mr. Timothy had certainly, to use a homely phrase, “been giving himself a good scrubbing;” he had used the soap unsparingly, for his well-filled cheeks and ample forehead glistened like an alabaster bust; and to crown all, just on the very peak of what would otherwise have been a flat head, there dangled a very graceful curl of rather greyish hair, formed by gathering the stray locks from adjacent parts, and, by some sleight of hand, causing them to combine and twist together, thereby not only making a finish, which some might admire, but also covering up a spot that, I am sorry to say, had no covering of its own. And never did the aforesaid planet manifest more real good will towards our little ball than was exhibited in the smile accompanying the very polite bow with which Mr. Timothy ushered himself into the room.

“Your servant, ladies; Mrs. Edwards, I hope I see you well; Miss Mary, your most obedient; don’t rise, ladies,

don't rise"—seeing them on their feet, and doing their best to return his respectful salutations.

Mr. Tightbody was immediately provided with a seat, but it was some time before he could make up his mind to take possession; he had two or three extra bows to make, and finally, just as he had apparently decided to be stationary, all at once he made a rapid movement towards Mrs. Edwards.

"Excuse me, my dear madam, but I had like to have forgotten my errand."

He handed her a letter. The bow, and the smile, and the presentation of the letter, together with the rapid retrograde move to the chair, was a sight not often witnessed.

"A letter from James!" said Mrs. Edwards, holding it up to the view of her daughters, "and there is no post-mark upon it; is it possible you have brought it from my son personally?"

Mr. Tightbody was again on his feet, and bending his body forward. "It affords me infinite pleasure, madam, to be able to answer in the affirmative; I saw your son at six o'clock this morning, and he— But I will not anticipate; the letter probably, madam, will reveal the whole."

"You will excuse a mother's anxiety, sir, and pardon me if I leave you a few moments to the care of my daughters."

Mr. Timothy would have been obliged to rise again, but as it happened he had not yet reached a resting-place, the bow was the lowest, the very lowest one he had made. "I shall be but too happy, madam, to be in such company; let me be no hindrance in the least, for although I have no chick nor child of my own, I can well realise—"

A brand just then fell down; Mr. Timothy flew towards the tongs, and Mrs. Edwards left the room.

How long she was absent, Mr. Timothy would not, in all probability, have been able to say, for he had so many anecdotes to tell; he was fond of anecdotes, and it so filled his whole heart with ecstasy to see the bright smile play about the rosy lips of the staid Mary, and to hear the whole-heart laugh of Julia, that time went with him for nothing.

When Mrs. Edwards returned she held the letter in her hands; her countenance was lighted with an expression of deep feeling; she had evidently been weeping, but they must have been tears of joy, for her mild eyes shone with unusual brightness, and every feature was softened into a look of happiness.

"Joy! girls, our dear James has found a situation."

"Joy! joy, dear mother!" was responded by both the happy sisters at once.

"And we are under many obligations to our friend Mr. Tightbody for his influence on James' behalf; for he frankly acknowledges that, without the aid of some such friend, he should not have succeeded."

The two sisters turned their eyes, glistening with tears of happiness, towards the benefactor of their brother.

"Don't, ladies, don't say one word, I beg of you;" Mr. Timothy was standing again; "not one word, my dear madam," turning towards Mrs. Edwards. "If any poor word of mine has been of any service to him—I mean to your son, madam, and your brother, ladies—it is a cause of unspeakable satisfaction to me."

It took some little time to get things righted again, or



at least to get Mr. Tightbody quietly seated in his chair; he was just like a jackjumper: the moment he was a little warmed by any exciting remark up he would go, and, when up, he seemed not exactly to know how to get back. At the present moment his feelings were flowing very fast, almost running away with him; in fact, he could hardly be said to have had the reins in his own hands, a combination of exciting circumstances having almost proved too much for his equanimity.

In the first place, he had put on a bran new suit, enough, generally, of itself, to affect the mind of a common man; then this was his first formal call; he had thought a great deal about it beforehand, and not only that, but his head had been full of strange fancies ever since his first interview with the family; he was nervous whenever he heard their names mentioned; he had peculiar feelings whenever he passed their cottage, or when he saw the mother and daughters walking, in all their gracefulness, to the church or along the highway; and even his dreams were more or less affected by visions in which they acted a conspicuous part. How long Mr. Timothy would have remained in this partially entranced state there is no telling, for in the midst of these enchanting thoughts there was an alarming rap at the front door. All started, even to Mr. Timothy.

Julia immediately seized a light, and, sprightly as aawn, was at the door in an instant. She was no coward, but on turning the latch, such a singular object presented itself, that she involuntarily stepped back a pace or two; as she did so, the person, or thing, walked within the doorway.

"Is massa here, missus?"

"What is your master's name?"

"Massa, massa; me been lookin' for him all ober de trete."

Just at that moment a little gust of wind blew out the light, and Julia at once retraced her steps to the sitting-room, not very sorry for an excuse to get there; for although she had been accustomed to blacks from her infancy, she had never seen anything in the shape of the one just then before her. No sooner did she turn to go through the passage, than she was conscious that the creature was shuffling along after her. Beginning to be alarmed, she quickened her speed; immediately her clothes were grasped; in the excitement of the moment, she screamed at the top of her voice, "Mother! mother!"


With a cry of terror, equally loud, the being behind her called out, "Mam Bet! Mam Bet! hold de light!"

In an instant the inmates of the room, light in hand, rushed to the spot. Mr. Timothy, as gallantry dictated, was in the van, and was the first to encounter the object which had caused the alarm.

"Don't be alarmed, ladies, don't be alarmed. Pomp, Pomp, what is this? how did you dare? go along this instant." This was said in a low voice, accompanied by pushes and pinches, which caused the subject for whose benefit they were intended to make a few rather rapid movements.

"What de matter now, Pomp? What fur you holler? Massa Tim, no dere?"

Mr. Timothy lifted up his eyes. "My——!" What word or words Mr. Timothy substituted for these blanks, it would be hard to say; for nothing escaped his lips but



that simple monosyllable. His look, however, betokened strong emotion. Immediately before him, and filling the whole doorway, stood old Bet, his housekeeper, her immense arms, and shoulders, and head revealed by the light of the lantern, which she held on high, the better to see what was going on in the passage, which was long and narrow.

"O Massa Tim, I'm most frighten to det. You mos kill Bet." She was, indeed, breathing very hard and short.

"I been all ober de trete a hunting for massa; you see missus," she now addressed herself to one of the ladies, who had stepped towards the door, "you see, missus, me was so frightened; me waits till eight o'clock and no massa, and then me waits till nine o'clock, and he no come yet; so I says, Pomp, you mus go fine him; but you see, missus, he ain't no better as a fool, he is so feared for de dark; so he sais, 'Mam Bet, I no goin stir foot, 'ont you go long wid de lantern.' I knowed Massa Tim gone for see de ladies, for he put on de bran new clothes and de best pleted bosom; so I sais, Pomp, me call fust at Massa Watkins', may be he gone to see Miss Julie, but he was no dare; den me call on Miss Dinah and de widow, but Massa Tim no dare; and so me taut may be he gone to see de new quality folks; but my bret is all gone."

During this long harangue, Mr. Timothy was obliged to be a silent listener; he would have been comparatively happy could an earthquake, tornado, or some such outbreak of nature just then have turned up, and carried him and the two members of his family, no matter where, only away from the present company; he would have interfered and silenced his housekeeper, if he had not known

that the thing was impossible ; one word from him would have brought a dozen from her.

Mam Bet, however, having delivered herself of the budget, stepping carefully, as an elephant does when not sure of his ground, finally got down the steps, and waddled along, swinging the lantern and calling upon "Massa Tim and Pomp to come along wid her, if dey wanted to see de holes and de ruts."

However Mr. Timothy may have suffered, and suffer he certainly did, there was too much genuine politeness on the part of those whose guests he had just been to allow of any expression of feeling, after he had parted from them, which they would not have manifested in his presence. It was a source of pain to them that they had been witnesses of his extreme mortification, and other matters of deep interest at once absorbed their attention.

"And now, dear mother," said Julia, as she closed the door and placed the light upon the table; "now for James' letter; do let us hear it, mother."

"Mary may read it if she pleases; it is quite a long one."

Mary took the precious document from her mother's hands, and as she opened it and saw the well-known writing, she imprinted a warm kiss upon the unconscious paper.

Letters are usually uninteresting documents, except to those for whom they may be at the time immediately intended; but as the one now under consideration will elucidate some part of our story, my readers must excuse its introduction.

MY VERY DEAR MOTHER :

The business of the day is over, and I am now seated in my snug room in the house where I expect and hope for some years to come to make my abode.


I have been, shall I say, fortunate ? My dear mother, I feel as I have never felt before, that a kind Providence has been watching over me. No peradventure has placed me where I am ; may I ever realise, as I now do, that He who watches the sparrows when they fall orders my concerns.

Little did I think when I bade you adieu, when with your sweet embrace you promised me all the aid it was in your power to give me—your constant prayers—and when, to encourage my heart, you repeated to me that benediction which my father left me on his dying-bed, how much I should need the first, and what a precious legacy—precious beyond all value that gold and silver have—was that farewell blessing.

I will not tell you now all the dark scenes that have visited me since we parted ; it is enough that they are past. Light came at the darkest moment ; in the hour of my extremity, influences which I could not have dreamed of operated in my behalf and placed me where I am. I have never told you, dear mother, all my thoughts and feelings in reference to this matter ; nor how solicitous I have been for months past to obtain a situation such as I now have.

When my father was compelled, through the power of his fatal disease, to close his worldly business, to relinquish all pursuit of gain, and retire to his sick-bed, I plainly saw

that, at no distant day, my efforts must be put in requisition for the support of the family. I knew, as you did not, how slender were our means. I saw, day by day, the little stock melting away. I knew that my father was conscious of that approaching poverty which he had so long dreaded, and my spirit agonised in sympathy with the anguish which racked his. You know how peculiar were his feelings; how unwilling he was to indulge the thought that any of us should ever be compelled to take a lower station than the one we held, to seek a living by those more humble means which is the portion of the many. It was my wish, as soon as he closed his office, to procure a situation where I could have laboured for you all; but I dared not propose it to him. My imagination was alive with sanguine ideas of what I could accomplish, and the highest happiness my mind portrayed was that of being able to earn, by my own efforts, a decent support for you all, and of knowing that the burden which lay so heavy on his heart was relieved; but I had not the courage to propose it to him. I feared that in his low and helpless estate, his sensitive mind would at once have taken the alarm; he would have felt that want was immediately upon us. At length it became evident to me that necessity would soon demand that something be done, and without the knowledge of my parents I made the attempt. I saw an advertisement by a firm that wanted a clerk, and I applied for the situation; I did it with much trembling; my application was not wholly rejected, but obstacles were presented which I had not anticipated. The firm was one of a peculiar kind, of substantial circumstances, close in calculation, and watchful.



over every particular of their interest. I felt that I could please them, for I knew that I was competent to the duties to be performed, and my efforts for their interest would have been untiring; but they required a reference as to my qualifications, to some one with whom I had served as clerk; you can realise my difficulty. Immediately our scene of trial came on.

On my return to New York, the same difficulty met me on each application, and crowds were rushing to every opening for a place. I began to feel that my attempt would be a failure, and that I must return to those who, at my own urgent plea, had cast themselves dependent upon me, and tell them, even if my heart should break in doing it, that the way before me, in the only employment to which I had been trained, was completely closed.


The day before I left you, as I was strolling over the fields, I witnessed a singular accident to a person who was driving near where I happened to be. His life was in danger, but by some exertion I succeeded in effecting his rescue. It proved to be our neighbour, Mr. Tight-body, then on his way to procure our goods which had arrived. I accompanied him, and assisted in loading and unloading, as you know. It was but a trifling circumstance, and one that passed from my mind, filled as it was with care and anticipation. A few days since, I met this same person in the city, and was conversing with him about things at our new home, when he was accosted by a gentleman as he passed, and I bade him good morning. It was the elder partner in the concern with which I am now employed—Mr. Gerardus Hunt. That evening, while visiting Mr. Upjohn, I received an

invitation to call and see the firm to which I told you I made my first application.

The way was now open for me, and I immediately entered upon the duties of the office. I am to board, free of all expense, with the family of the elder partner, and to receive the first year £60, with an annual increase.

And now, dear mother and sisters, I wish I could let you see how happy my heart is. You all seem dearer to me than ever, because I feel that I have a right to love you; I can prove it in a more substantial way than by mere words, although I do not think for a moment that you would ever have doubted my warm affection. But has it not been strange? You will not wonder now that I have been made to realise a Providence that orders our private affairs, and works by what we are apt to call trifling events.

This Mr. Tightbody must be a man of kind feelings, and I hope if he calls to see you that he may be received with attention. I thought the girls were somewhat disposed to smile when his name was mentioned; he cannot help his name. Adieu, my dear mother and dear sisters, and be as happy as you can.



CHAPTER VII.

I DO not know how it is with my readers, but for myself, I must confess that when interested in the progress of any work, or the development of growth, either in the natural or moral world, I like to let periods of longer or shorter duration occur, when I shut them away from my observation, that I may mark with more distinctness the advance which has been made. A pleasure is often afforded to the mind more impressive than can be derived from the same objects, while viewing the slow and imperceptible operation of cause and effect, as they work their steadily change.

Is it too much to ask my reader to take an electric leap over three whole years of our mortal existence; to leave our weary planet, with all its countless interests, to roll through the long journey, while we take no notice of its "idle whirl?" The thing cannot be done except on paper; but since in this way long jumps may, at times, be made, and profitably too, I must be indulged with the experiment.

Three years make great changes sometimes. It is long enough, with the whirling speed that now marks every movement, to make us strangers in our world, could we let go our hold upon it, and cease to mark the vision, as its

TO BE LOVED.

As we look before our view into other forms and
as we look back at this now, would we keep up with

the world which our story embraces, things
are passing on with a rapid pace. Man breathed more
freely at his leisure, and seemed to feel
that he was given him to enjoy, and not merely to

As the circle of our story, three years have
passed. Changes have been gradually working.
Changes which the heart most dearly clings to,
passing on with accumulating power. The light-
heartedness of the maiden of sixteen, upon whose
face no darkness ever spreads its veil, has
been replaced by the more serious and entrancing loveliness of
womanhood, where springs of curious workmanship play
and power, grasping the whole being within
its embrace, and filling it with ecstasy, that knows
no rest but in Heaven's own beatitude, or pressing
downward beautiful emotions beneath a crushing weight.

The family of the Upjohns has moved on in the
same quiet and steady round. Not a wrinkle more has
appeared on the brow of the old man, and the same kind
marks the placid countenance of his good woman ;
content with their humble lot, and industriously plod-
ding the daily path of life, their fireside is yet cheerful
and warm with the glow of kindly feeling.

She has altered somewhat. The girl with prudish
features has passed into the full bloom of womanhood, graceful
in her carriage, and beautiful in her form and features.

Whether her heart is as light as it once was, I dare

not say, although the happiness which thrills it may exceed all that her thoughts could once have imagined. She has reached an age when the affections bear sway, and reason and prudence too often yield to their power.

The Messrs. Hunt have found in James Edwards a valuable assistant. His entire devotion to their interests, and his increasing ability to discharge the duties devolving upon him, have fully realised the expectations of his friends, and even Mr. Geordie Hunt reposes implicit confidence in his fidelity.

The only shadow that, at times, comes across the moral atmosphere of the young man, is caused by some peculiarities in one who, although partner of the concern, and as such his superior, has ever been more as a companion than a master. Rudolph Hunt was one whom James could never fully comprehend.

He could not, indeed, complain that Rudolph had ever usurped authority over him, or treated him with that distance which junior partners are too apt to indulge towards those subordinate to them in station, although equal in other respects; on the contrary, their intercourse had been familiar, and many a kind act on the part of Rudolph had laid James under obligations which he could not easily forget. But with all his suavity of manners, and the generosity he had manifested, the latter could not be blinded to certain dark traits which would, in the freedom of intercourse, obtrude themselves: marring what he would have wished to love, and shaking his confidence where he would have been glad to feel that there was a sure foundation upon which to rest.

The call which Rudolph had made at the house of Mr.

Lippell, at a word from the waiter, returned to the introduction. He reported that evening was quite premature 10.0 (about 9.15) and returned. His manners were pleasing and he was somewhat glad to meet by no means unimpeachable in his little manner. With much respect to the woman: that and that he evening was pleasantly away. These said had a rougher evening quite frequent, and so the summer: evenings were he effects were introduced with the others in pleasant. With woman of invited around to be over the side of a enjoy he trouperage. Two gentlemen would much have expected the see should answer to be late but not now could the look of this reflecting on a young and high-spirited they had once used young themselves. The young man too was of an standing, and perhaps in the opinion of many, better on the whole than she. But of this the old folks thought not. They could imagine no cause of society that Gray was not fully equal to; and yet when they would sit together, while she was thus away even until the evening had been spent, thoughts would come over them that for the moment were like the shadow of a dark cloud on. like it they would soon fly by, and Gray would come home, and smile sweetly upon them, and knock up courteously bid them a good night, and it was all well.

But, when all was well. Crissy might not have been gifted with that strong sense of propriety which many have; she may have been less on her guard against the faithlessness of man than many of her sex and age, but she had a firm and guileless heart; she thought no evil, and she feared none. Every attention on the part of Roderick she received as an expression of his good will,

of his kind feelings towards her. She received it in all honesty of soul, and as these tokens of his feelings were neither few, nor far between, they won upon her heart. He became more and more associated with the happier spots in her existence; his presence seemed to be necessary to make every occasion of joy just what it should be. In every vision of beauty that flitted through her young mind, he was a conspicuous figure. In her dreams by night, and in those livelier and more entrancing dreams by day, in which her spirit loved to lose its present realities and bathe in delights of its own framing, he was one, the principal one, whose virtues, as her mind painted them, gilded the whole scene with rays of beauty. And thus around her young and susceptible heart, by degrees a chain has been cast. Its links may have been formed of nothing stronger than the trifles I have named, but they held her ardent feelings in an embrace firmer than the iron clasp that holds the criminal to his cell.

The little family at the White Cottage are no longer mourners. The weeds of sorrow have been laid aside, and time has kindly soothed their agonised feelings. Their humble home has been surrounded with many little embellishments, the work of their own hands. Shrubs and plants are blooming without, and order, neatness, and taste are manifest in every department within. They have known no real wants, although compelled by restricted means to the practice of rigid economy.

Faithful to his trust, James has consecrated every cent of his income, except what was needful for the supply of decent apparel for himself, to their comfort. Occasionally, he has been enabled to spend short periods with them;

pure streams of delight they have been—each ~~visiting~~ ~~mutually~~ ~~new~~ ~~charms~~ in each other, and binding in ~~stronger~~ ~~and~~ ~~more~~ ~~tender~~ ~~hands~~ their warm affections.

The ~~time~~ ~~when~~ ~~a~~ ~~mother's~~ ~~sensitive~~ ~~heart~~ ~~at~~ ~~times~~ ~~might~~ ~~up~~ ~~be~~ ~~this~~ ~~lured~~ ~~one~~ ~~should~~ ~~be~~ ~~led~~ ~~astray~~, have ~~long~~ ~~now~~ ~~been~~ ~~quieted~~. His generous spirit sparkles ~~more~~ ~~but~~ ~~in~~ ~~all~~ ~~its~~ ~~purity~~ ~~and~~ ~~brightness~~, and she feels ~~that~~ ~~his~~ ~~prayers~~ ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~answered~~, and looks forward ~~with~~ ~~more~~ ~~confidence~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~day~~ ~~when~~ ~~his~~ ~~faithfulness~~ ~~and~~ ~~his~~ ~~power~~, ~~and~~ ~~her~~ ~~noble~~ ~~boy~~ ~~stand~~ ~~high~~ ~~among~~ ~~the~~ ~~comparisons~~ ~~of~~ ~~distinction~~ ~~as~~ ~~he~~ ~~now~~ ~~does~~ ~~before~~ ~~her~~

~~as~~ ~~a~~ ~~father~~ ~~and~~ ~~good~~ ~~son~~ ~~and~~ ~~brother~~. Three years, ~~then~~, ~~have~~ ~~relieved~~ ~~their~~ ~~distresses~~, and confirmed their ~~joy~~. ~~and~~ ~~around~~ ~~that~~ ~~little~~ ~~family~~ ~~bright~~ ~~scenes~~ ~~are~~ ~~springing~~ ~~warming~~ ~~with~~ ~~life~~, and ~~painting~~ ~~with~~ ~~loveliness~~, ~~the~~ ~~unity~~ ~~that~~ ~~forms~~ ~~the~~ ~~circle~~ ~~of~~ ~~their~~ ~~interests~~, and ~~even~~ ~~the~~ ~~few~~ ~~scattered~~ ~~clouds~~ ~~that~~ ~~rest~~ ~~upon~~ ~~their~~ ~~horizon~~ ~~with~~ ~~hues~~ ~~of~~ ~~beauty~~.



CHAPTER VIII.

It was Saturday afternoon, and seated in his neat and commodious study, surrounded with those rich stores which the great and good of past ages have left for the benefit of all coming generations, the Rev. Mr. Wharton was just finishing his exercises for the coming Sabbath, when there was a tap at the door, and the servant-maid announced that Mr. Tightbody was below, and would be glad to see Mr. Wharton alone.

"Show him up, by all means."

Mr. Tightbody has altered in nothing material since we last saw him, except, it may be, that his round face is a little rounder, and his coat might be rather more difficult to button. The expression of his countenance was, however, of a different cast from any that we have seen him wear before. Something of a serious and alarming nature it must be, for his colour has gone, and, as he bowed and addressed Mr. Wharton, there was a tremor in his voice, and the hand which he extended was as cold as an iceberg. He took the seat assigned to him in silence, and taking from his pocket a paper, "I have just come from the Point, sir, and, while there, accidentally cast my eye upon an article in this paper. Perhaps, sir, you have heard something more particular from the family, and can throw some light upon it."

He handed it to Mr. Wharton, and, with a trembling hand, pointed to the paragraph. Mr. Wharton was of a nervous temperament, and the evident excitement under which his visitor laboured did not fail to produce a corresponding effect upon him. The article was among the news of the day :—

“**ROBBERY.**—A robbery to a large amount was yesterday ascertained to have been committed upon Messrs. G. and A. Hunt, ship-chandlers, in —— street, and a young man by the name of Edwards, living with them as clerk, was suspected, and, circumstances being so strong against him, has been arrested, and, for want of bail, committed to prison.

“The sum taken from Messrs. Hunt is six thousand dollars. It is supposed the young man has squandered it at the gambling-table. Until the time of his arrest his character was thought to be unexceptionable. It is said that a mother and two sisters are dependent upon him for support.”

Mr. Wharton read it through, and then turning his pale and troubled countenance upon Mr. Tightbody, who had been watching him with intense interest, “Can this be true?”


“I know not, sir; I saw it, as I told you, at the Point, and not knowing what to do about it, have first brought it to you, sir.”

“Then you have not shown it to Mrs. Edwards?”

“No living soul in the town has seen it, sir, but yourself.”

“I believe this paper is not taken here?”

“No, sir, nor any other from the city, but the one



you take, and that will not be in until the first of the week."

"We must move cautiously in this matter, Mr. Tightbody, and do nothing to circulate this terrible news. The family must be informed of it in as gentle a manner as possible; and who shall do it?"

"There is no one but Mr. Wharton himself that is fitting for such an errand. I would not undertake it myself for all the land between this and the ocean."

"There may be some mistake after all; but if you will leave this paper with me, Mr. Tightbody, I will endeavour to do the best I can, and act as circumstances shall dictate. When did it take place?—yesterday?"

"The paper is dated yesterday, sir; the sad occurrence must have taken place on Thursday."

"Thursday; that would almost give time for the family to receive some tidings to-day: perhaps we may be saved the sad necessity of unfolding the intelligence to them. I think, Mr. Tightbody, that I shall delay the matter until Monday morning; in the meantime, let no notice of it by any means get abroad."

"It shall never get abroad from me, sir."

As Mr. Tightbody departed, Mr. Wharton again cast his eye carefully over the notice, and then arose and walked the room, under strong excitement; he had put a powerful restraint upon his feelings during the interview, but when left alone, the calamity in all its aggravating form came up vividly before him. He dearly loved this family; he loved this young man; he loved, with almost parental affection, the elder sister, who had been for three years under his tuition. Her gentleness,

her respectful attention, her brilliant mind, her ardent feelings—all had won his heart.

And then what course should he pursue? Should he go and show them this fatal paper, or wait for some intimation from them as to their knowledge of the circumstances? Either alternative presented to his sensitive heart a sickening aspect.

The Sabbath was at hand. He would wait until its sacred hours had passed, when both he and they might be better fitted to sustain the severe ordeal. He then rang the bell for Mrs. Wharton.

On entering, she uttered an exclamation of surprise at his troubled appearance. The only reply he made was to hand her the paper, and point to the fatal paragraph, requesting her to read and be silent.

"My dear husband, what does it mean? Edwards! Edwards! can this be our James?"

"I fear it is; I cannot doubt it."

"Oh, Mr. Wharton, how can it be! James Edwards! What will his poor mother and sisters do? My dear husband, it will kill them. And what does it say at the last part of it? Gambling! Oh, the poor, ruined young man! But the dear child has no father;" and Mrs. Wharton relieved the agony of her feelings by a flood of tears.

The sweet Sabbath came with its multiplied blessings, but the heart of the pastor was weighed down under a burden that his spirit could not throw off. Mrs. Edwards and Mary were in their seat at church; and as his eyes fell upon them, in passing over the congregation, the sickening assurance almost palsied his efforts, that they

knew nothing of the hateful secret, which he feared it was to be *his* painful duty to disclose to them.

Monday came; a calm, bright, beautiful day. The frosts of late had left their changeful influence upon the trees and shrubs, and, to those who admire autumn's variegated hues, it was a time for the heart to take its fill of Nature's beauties.

Mrs. Wharton concluded to accompany her husband to the cottage. Julia espied them a short distance from the house, and came tripping like a fawn to meet and escort them in. At the door, Mrs. Edwards was ready with her friendly greeting, and Mary's bright eye sparkled with delight, as she came into the room after they were seated, and thanked them most affectionately for their early call.

What would they not have given then, to have been ignorant of the heart-rending intelligence they had come to communicate.

"Mr. Wharton," said Mary, "I forgot to tell you, when at the parsonage on Saturday, we had received a letter from James."

A thrill of hope electrified his frame.

"What was its date, Mary?" he asked eagerly.

"It was dated on Tuesday last; I don't know why it has been so long getting to us."

His hope was gone.

"Was he well?"

"Oh, yes, sir, very well; and his letter is in a much more cheerful strain than usual."

However painful the task, Mr. Wharton resolved at once to unfold his errand; and requesting Mrs. Edwards

to accompany him into the adjoining room, she politely led the way; and, as soon as they were seated; "Have you no intelligence, Mrs. Edwards, from your son since the date of that letter?"

"None, sir, whatever;" and, looking at him with a searching eye; "Have you, sir, heard anything from him?"

"Not directly."

"Mr. Wharton," said she, clasping her hands firmly together, and her lip quivering with emotion, "you have heard something; tell me, oh, tell me, what it is."


"Mrs. Edwards, have you ever suspected James of any improper habits?"

"James, sir? James? why, sir? why do you ask me? You know, Mr. Wharton, we have every reason to believe him most spotless; who doubts it, sir?"

"I never have, my dear Mrs. Edwards, but I have received a paper from New York, which contains a paragraph that I must say has caused me a great deal of suffering, and I have thought it my duty to show it to you."

He handed her the paper, and pointed, as well as his agitated nerves would allow, to the fatal article. He sat a moment in breathless suspense; he saw the paper gliding from her hands, and caught a glimpse of the death-like pallor that overspread her countenance; and, calling in haste for Mrs. Wharton, the children rushed with her into the room.

When the heart pours out the first wailings of its agony, when dire calamity in its most crucifying form, first strikes the appalled senses, there is such an utterance to the horror of the soul, such an outbursting of the



spirit's pangs, such a heaving away of all barriers by the rushing floods of passion, that into its whirling current any heart is drawn that stands within the bounds of sympathy. Neither Mr. Wharton nor his wife were made of such materials as fitted them to witness the thrilling scene; but, where deep responsibility rests upon us, the spirit is sustained to do and to dare with superhuman energy.

After using such remedies as the house afforded for the recovery of Mrs. Edwards, as soon as there were signs of returning consciousness, Mr. Wharton left the room with Mary, who had been imploring him with tears to inform her of the cause of her mother's distress.

In his hands was the fatal paper; but he dared not venture committing it to Mary, until first her mind should be in some measure prepared for the blow.

"My dear child, I want you to nerve your mind with all the fortitude you can command, not only for your own sake; but that you may help sustain your mother; I offer you a father's home and protection."

She threw herself into his arms.

"Oh, Mr. Wharton, you have been a father to us; but tell me, ah, tell me, is my brother dead? is my brother dead? tell me, tell me!"

"He is not dead, Mary."

She drew back, and, clasping her hands, looked at him in a calm but most earnest manner.

"Is he not dead?"

"No, he is not, Mary."

"Is there any hope of his life?"

"His life is not in any danger."

A moment she covered her face, and then fixing on him the same earnest gaze ; " Mr. Wharton, now you may let me know the worst. I am not afraid to hear anything now."

" There may be some mistake after all. But here is the paper, my dear child, read for yourself."

Mary sat down, and looked steadily through the paragraph, and even went over it a second time.

" Mr. Wharton, this may all be true, but true or false, I must go and see my dear brother ; innocent or guilty, his sister will suffer with him ! O James ! James ! my brother ! my brother !" She wept bitterly.

Mr. Wharton left her, and again entered the room where Mrs. Edwards was. She had recovered from her swoon, but was still reclining on the bed. Mrs. Wharton was sitting beside her.

" It is a bitter cup," said she, extending her hand as the reverend man approached ; " but my Father would not have put it to my lips, if he did not see that I needed it. Oh, sir, the pangs which my poor heart has suffered within this short hour, may you never know. My poor James ! But he shall soon see that a mother's love changes not ; his guilt and his prison I shall share. But where is Mary ?"

She heard her mother's voice and immediately entered the room. Her tears were wiped away. She came with a light step to where her mother lay, took her hand, stooped and kissed her affectionately.

" Mother, I must go and see James."

" We will both go, my dear ; if we can do nothing else, we will bear the shame with him."

"Mother, dear mother," said Julia, who had been sitting in one corner of the room, and weeping in agony, "let me go too ; I know I can comfort James. Do, mother, let me go !"

After some consultation, it was concluded that Mr. Wharton should accompany Mrs. Edwards and Mary to New York, and that Julia should make her home at the Parsonage until their return. He could not, however, leave the house until he had knelt with them before our Heavenly Father, and committed this afflicted family to the care of Him who has been known in all ages as the Father of the fatherless and the God of the widow.

CHAPTER IX.

THE report which had caused such alarm and sorrow at the White Cottage was, alas ! too true. A sad change had taken place in the circumstances of James Edwards, and in the opinion which his friends in the city had entertained concerning him.

The Messrs. Hunt had, for many years, been in the habit of keeping at the house of the elder partner, a strong box or iron chest, for the purpose of depositing therein their more valuable papers, such as notes of hand, bonds and mortgages, deeds, &c., &c.

Within the same strong box was also lodged, very safely every night, a small fancy trunk, containing whatever moneys might be on hand at the close of the day : for, as I have before said, the Messrs. Hunt made no deposits in any bank ; besides this little trunk, which travelled daily between the store and the dwelling, there was stationed in one corner of the chest, a small box with a sliding cover, containing the private funds, &c., which belonged to the elder partner, and it was from this box that the contents were missing.

It appears that for some weeks a sum of money had been lying idle beneath the little sliding cover, Mr. Hunt having received it for some property of his own which he

had sold; not finding an opportunity that suited him for a permanent investment, he had concluded to loan it to the concern, as they were about to lay in a large stock of some leading article in their line. It was not until the very day upon which the funds were to be used that Mr. Hunt ascertained, to his inexpressible consternation, that the little box was empty. James had just arisen from the breakfast table, and gone on his way to the store, when Mr. Hunt took down the key from the place where it usually hung, in a little cupboard which opened into his own bedroom, and went down stairs into a cellar under the back-building of his house. As he attempted to open the door with the key which he had brought with him, to his surprise he found one already in the door which turned the lock with ease. He opened the door—it was a small neat room, the walls whitewashed, and the floor paved with brick; on one end were several shelves filled with choice wines, too good to be used very freely, and in the centre, alone in its glory, stood the before-mentioned iron chest.

The old gentleman was startled by the phenomenon of the key, and his first thought, as soon as he perceived that his chest was safe, was that some one had been making free with his Madeira; but not a vacancy was visible, except the one made by the withdrawal of a bottle a few days previous by his own hands, to treat a rare friend.

He then tried the lid of the chest, and shook it hard, but it refused to open; he applied the ponderous key; the strong bolt flew open with a sound that made the vault ring; he raised the lid, and everything appeared to

be in *statu quo*; again he locked it and began to ponder about the strange key in the door; compared with the one in his hand, there was but a shade of difference. Thinking it possible that Mrs. Hunt could throw some light upon the matter, he requested a servant from the adjoining kitchen to call her. Mrs. Hunt was well to do in the way of flesh, and came as rapidly as could be expected; as soon as she was in the little room, he shut the door.

"Do you know, Peggy, anything about that key?"

"Know! why, yes; that's the key of this 'ere vault," looking at her husband as she spoke.

"No, it ain't—no such thing—see here; this is the key, I just now brought it down out of the cupboard."

"Where did you find this, then?"

"Sticking in that door."

Mrs. Hunt *put her two hands against her sides*, and looked at her husband in great astonishment.

"What upon earth does it mean, Geordie?"

"That's just what I sent for you to tell me; *don't* you know *nothing* about that key?"

Mrs. Hunt, finding that her husband was becoming somewhat agitated, put on her spectacles and examined the key in earnest.

"It looks to me, Mr. Hunt, like the key to the boys' room; but I will send up and see."

Just then her niece made her appearance in the passage, singing a lively air and skipping along on her way up stairs.

"Sally, Sally."

"What, aunt?" and Sally, or Sarah, full of life and

beauty, came quickly to her. "Did you call me, aunt?"

"Yes, child, here; do you go up to the boys' room; James has gone to the store. You just step up there, and see if this key isn't the key of their closet door; but stay—Betty will know more about it—I'll send Betty."

And so she *fumbled* her way into the kitchen, Sarah resumed her pleasant tune, threw back her curls, and was soon out of hearing.

While Mrs. Hunt was holding counsel with Betty, Mr. Hunt began to think that he might as well open his chest again, and examine more particularly into matters there. He did, to be sure, feel no uneasiness as to there having been any fingering of things in his strong box, when he found it under the control of its own key which he held in possession; it might be broken open, he knew, by a crowbar or other powerful instrument, but as to opening it in a fair way, it was out of the question. No lock was similar to it in the country; the smith, who made it on a new principle, having died just as this single one was completed; he had therefore been in no haste to make particular examination of the interior, when, as I have said, it opened to the key which he generally kept under his own eye. But still, he thought he might as well see that all was safe; he had opened it again, therefore, and was just removing the lid from his little box, when Mrs. Hunt entered the room; he was seated on the chest which he had shut down, and as he took out his papers, one by one, he laid them with great care beside him; the last thing he took out was a worsted pocket-book, tied together with green ribbon.

"Is your money all there, Geordie?"

Finding that he did not make any reply, but only looked up at her as he sat on the chest with a wild and vacant stare, she took the pocket-book from his hand, and began to examine for herself.

"Why, there's nothing here; did you keep it in here?"

Geordie answered not, but kept his eyes still fixed upon her, swallowing, and choking, and apparently wishing to say something.

"Mr. Hunt, there's nothing here, see," and she shook the pocket-book and a little gold piece dropt out.

"There, that's all there is; I thought you said last night, that you had six thousand dollars you was going to let the store have?"

"So I had," screaming in a high voice, "but it's gone, it's all gone,"—louder and louder—"we're robbed and ruined;" jumping up at the same time. "Oh, *dear*, oh, *dear*," walking up and down very fast. "Oh, *dear*, oh, *dear*," pressing his hands against his sides as in great pain. "Oh, *dear*, oh, *dear*; wife, what shall I do? I believe I'm getting one of my turns; we're robbed and ruined. Oh, *dear*, oh, *dear*, it's all gone. Do, wife, get something, a little something or other; I shall die—it grows worse and worse."

Mrs. Hunt made all the haste a person of her size well could, to prepare some drugs which she kept on hand, Mr. Hunt being subject to violent attacks of pain. Betty had, at that moment, returned from her exploring expedition in regard to the strange key, when meeting Mrs. Hunt, and hearing the uproar in the vault—

"May I be blest!—and what's that? is it another turn he's got?"

"Yes, Betty, put on some water, quick."

"And that I will, ma'am; the poor soul, how he laments."

Betty had scarcely time, however, to hang the kettle on, when she heard Mr. Hunt's voice calling loudly for her.

"Betty! Betty!"

"I'm coming the instant, your honour."

"About that key, Betty; can you tell where it belongs? Oh, dear! oh, dear! where is it?"

"And it's up in the boys' room, sir; jist where it belongs."

"Do you know the key, Betty?"

"And do I know myself, sir? Ain't I a locking the door every day after I've claned the room, and ain't there the very mark Mr. James put upon it himself?"

"What mark?"

"Why, sir, when the key to the kitchen pantry was mislaid, and it was I that couldn't get in, and Mrs. Hunt calling for supper, and no supper could I get by raison of the key that was gone, Mr. James was going through the entry just there away, and hearing me making such a to-do, he asks—'Betty, what's the matter?' 'The matter,' sais I, 'and ain't there matter enough? here are they calling for supper, and no key to be found.' 'Let's see, Betty,' sais he, 'what kind of a key do you want?' and he looked at the door and says, 'I guess, Betty, I can help you.' 'That's a darlin',' sais I, and up he goes and brings down a key, and opened the door in a trice,

and right glad was I; and when I wanted him to have it until such time as the other could be found, he says, 'I'll mark it, Betty, so that you shan't be claiming it for the kitchen, and Mrs. Hunt be scolding me for the key,' and so he marks it with a cross, and it's plain to be seen on it now."

"And was that key in his door yesterday?"

"That's more nor I can say, sir, for it's true as I live, I never locked it yesterday."

Mrs. Hunt now came with her mixture, and Betty ran for the hot water, as Mr. Hunt was still exhibiting signs of great distress. The usual remedy, however, soon brought some relief. As soon as he could attend to matters, he requested his brother to be sent for from the store; although of very different dispositions, they were much attached to each other, and nothing of a joyous or troublous nature affected one, but the other must be called to share in it.

Mr. Augustus Hunt obeyed the summons, promptly, and was soon among them, listening to the wonderful narration of his brother's disaster. He was, as I have before hinted, the better looking of the two, and, indeed, would have been remarked anywhere as a person of good appearance; his form was portly, his face round and ruddy, as though his fare was good and nourishing; his eyes, not large, but they had a lively, pleasant twinkle; and the whole expression of the countenance of that open, cheerful character which, at once, wins the confidence of the beholder, and indicated what he really was—a shrewd, kind-hearted man.

After all due expressions of sympathy for his brother's

trial, he sat down, and, in a very calm and quiet manner, began to question him as to every particular of the affair.

Geordie answered rather tartly, and continued to walk up and down the room, at times groaning with pain, and then uttering a volley of execrations on the villain who had robbed and ruined him.

Mr. Augustus seemed to think a great deal about the fact of the key being found in the door; he sent for it, examined it closely, scrutinised the mark on it, and compared it with the key belonging to the vault.

"And where, brother Geordie, do you keep the key of the chest?"

"Why, you know, Gussy, I always keep it in that there cupboard in our room, right in sight."

"Well, do you always go to the chest yourself, or do you let the young men go to it?"

"No, no, never; they never go to it; I always go to it myself, and hang the key up just in that place; it has hung there these fifteen years; that wife knows."

"Yes, yes; Geordie is very particular about that; he never gets into bed, but the last thing he looks at is the key, to see that it is safe."

"Are you sure, brother, that you examined the chest thoroughly, and that there is no possibility of its being in some corner or other there now? have you any other box there?"

"No, no; there's nothing else there but the little trunk, and that is here; I brought it with me. Oh, dear! oh, dear! you can look at it yourself."

Mr. Augustus sat silently for some time, and then look-


ing significantly at his brother; "I think, brother, it looks very much as though there had been some foul play here; don't you think so? you say that you saw it there last night?"

"No, no, no; I did not say last night; it is a week ago last night, I said, since I counted the money; you remember, wife, don't you? I told you about it. Oh, dear! oh, dear!"

"Yes, yes; I remember very well. You see, brother, Mr. Hunt is very particular about that key; he always hangs it up jist in one way; step here and I'll show you; there, that's the way he hangs it; he's as particular about it as can be. Well, last week it was, just as he was going to bed, he looks up at his key and then says, 'Wife, some one has been at my key; it ain't hung up right;' so I looks at it, 'no,' says I, 'it ain't right;' so he goes up and takes down the key and looks at it. 'Somebody has had this key, that's sure; see here,' and he comes and shows it to me, and there seemed to be something on it jist like dough; says I, 'Mr. Hunt, you had better go right down and see that all is safe;' so down he went, just as he was, and when he came back, he said it was all straight, the money was all there; but we've always been puzzled about the key's being hung up wrong."

Mr. Augustus kept his eye upon his brother as he walked to and fro, groaning and soliloquising, while his wife was detailing the scene just recorded; at length, shaking his head significantly—

"There's something wrong, brother, depend upon it there's something wrong; I shouldn't be surprised,



brother, if it should turn out that you had been robbed. What do you think about it?"

"Think about it! why ain't I told you a dozen times already, that I've been robbed; where's the use of thinking and thinking about it. I know it—there's the pocket-book; look for yourself—it's all gone—six thousand dollars—all gone—and if anybody could tell me—oh, dear; oh, dear—where it is—oh, dear, dear, dear!"

"Well, brother Geordie, that's just what I've been thinking—the money's gone—that's a clear case. Now the next question is, where has it gone to? and my opinion is," looking at Mrs. Hunt very significantly, "though Geordie must do as he likes, seeing the money belongs to him, but my opinion is, that he had better send for old Catchem; if the money is to be found, he will find it, and if the rogue is in this world, he will catch him, only give him the scent."

As Mr. Augustus Hunt's opinion coincided with that of his brother, old Catchem, one of the chief constables of the city of New York, was sent for, and that great terror to evil-doers was soon under their roof, and prepared for his work.


As he was a personage not met with every day in the common walks of life, a description of him may not be uninteresting to many of my readers. His stature was of medium size, rather thick set; large bushy head; dark complexion; large projecting eyes, very black; aquiline nose, and a very large mouth, with a heavy under lip, considerably rolled over. When he walked, he had a slouchy, rolling gait, his head moving from side to side, and his eyes in perpetual motion, glancing from object

to object, and from person to person, apparently not looking long enough at either persons or things to receive any impression, and yet, it is said, never passing either without taking full cognisance thereof, so as to be able at any time to recall them perfectly. He was a fearless, faithful officer, and went straight forward in the discharge of the duties before him, as though there were no such thing as personal danger, and without making much allowance for the more tender feelings of human nature.

Mr. Augustus Hunt took upon himself the task of explaining matters to this officer, and was careful to mention that his brother would give five hundred dollars for the recovery of the money, with or without the thief.

Old Catchem soon showed that he was a master workman, and convinced Mr. Hunt that the theft must have been committed by some member of his family, or by some person in the habit of frequenting his house.

He summoned the inmates of the kitchen, Betty and Jim, and would not allow them to stir from his presence. Their niece Sarah was called in, and a messenger dispatched to the store for young Edwards. James had no idea of the purpose for which he was required, and appeared to be much surprised when he found himself in the presence of a constable, and heard the account of the lost money; had he been perfectly innocent, he could not have acted more like himself. Some few questions were put to each separately, with special reference to the matter of the key—where it was found—where it belonged, &c. Betty was called upon to tell over all she knew about it. During her recital, the eye of the officer rested a moment on young Edwards; a slight flush passed over his coun-



tenance ; it was but a flush, and was gone in an instant, but Catchem saw it, and did not forget it ; he kept his eye more steadily that way. This very circumstance might have affected James, as he was full of sensibility.

The officer now desired to be led to the apartments occupied by Betty and Jim. Betty started ahead, muttering, as she went, about "going into people's rooms before one had time to make them a bit decent."

"Never mind, old lady, I've seen all kinds of rooms in my day."

"I'm no leddy, nor auld, neither ; but there's the trunk ; you may look as ye like ; I wants no money but what my own hands 'arn—there, look as ye like, and be blest to you !"

Betty's trunk was pretty thoroughly examined, and then master Jim was obliged to lead the way to his roost, which was a small room at another corner of the garret ; he went directly to his box, and was beginning to throw out the few articles it contained, when Catchem, very unceremoniously, laid hold of his collar, and giving him a jerk, left him standing in the middle of the room, and proceeded to overhaul Jemmie's treasures in a very careful manner. He, manifestly, expected to find some clue to matters here, but was disappointed ; not any signs of money, good, bad, or indifferent, could be found, it being an article which the owner of the box contrived to get rid of, without the trouble of hoarding it.

"And now, my young gentleman, show me the way to where you keep your choice articles."

Edwards coloured deeply, bowed very formally to him, and with a measured step, proceeded to his room. He

was either much displeased with the manner of the constable, or very much excited by some other cause; so much so that some of the family could not but notice it.

The key was again introduced, and Betty called upon to repeat her story. She invoked all the saints to witness that she spoke nothing but the truth, and that Mr. James would tell them how he had marked it with his own hands. The keen eye of Catchem was fixed upon Edwards during her recital, and when she ceased, he was asked to repeat the circumstances himself.

"I think, sir, you have had already sufficient explanation as to the identity of the key."

"Well, young gentleman, how do you account for this key being found in the door of the vault?"

"I do not feel, sir, that it is my business to account for it," at the same time eyeing his interrogator with a look of scorn.

"Perhaps you may find it your business, before you get through—so don't be huffy, sir. Who occupies this room with you?"

"No one, sir."

"Do you ever carry that key in your pocket?"

"No, I do not."

"Are you in the habit of locking that door?"

"Occasionally."


"Is the key always kept in it?"

"I believe it is."

"Have you missed the key this day or two?"

"I did miss it."

"Have you made any inquiries in the family for it?"



Edwards coloured deeply again.

"No, I did not; I thought—I supposed it had been taken probably for some other door in the house."

"Now, young man, let me have the key of this trunk; it is yours, I suppose?"

"That you shall not have, sir. If Mr. Hunt suspects that there is anything in my trunk belonging to him, I will open it, and satisfy him that there is nothing in it but my own property."

"Young man, I order you to hand me the key of that trunk, and let me open it and examine its contents; if you do not, it shall be opened by force."

"Touch it, sir, at your peril; I have already offered to satisfy those who have any interest in this matter; let any one else touch it at their peril." As he said this, he stepped up close to the trunk, and with an eye flashing indignation, surveyed the group before him.

"Young man," said the officer, at the same time taking a short iron instrument from his pocket, "you might as well save all this trouble; this trunk shall be opened, with your leave or without it, just as you please." So saying, he stepped deliberately towards it, when Betty, fearing Mr. James was "going to be kilt," threw herself between him and the constable.

"For the love of goodness, Mr. James, give him the key, give him the key, and save your young blood, and character, too." With that, she wrested the key violently from his hand and threw it on the floor.

"There, honey, now let him have it, let him look as he likes; he'll never find anything there but belongs to it. Do, do, now honey," seeing James making efforts to

recover the key; "for the love of goodness, Mr. James, hear to me, and leave him to look."

James's better sense returned to him, he felt that he was wrong, and Betty in the right. He took a stand at some distance, with the rest, and suffered the examination to proceed, looking on as an indifferent spectator.

Every article in the body of the trunk was thoroughly searched, and replaced. Nothing that could be claimed by any one but Edwards was there.

The little rod was then taken out, which secured the opening into the cover of the trunk; the officer thrust his hand into it and, almost immediately, brought out a small parcel, and, on opening it, discovered a roll of bank-bills.

"Mr. Hunt, are these the bills which you have lost?"

Mr. Hunt took them, and examined the backs of each carefully.

"These are some of them, sir; I marked them with the letter D, in red ink; you can all examine them."

The identity of the bills was abundantly proved; but only five hundred dollars of the amount could be discovered in the trunk by the most scrutinising search.

It would be vain to attempt a description of the scene which followed. James had been a great favourite in the family; his amiable disposition, his respectful behaviour, the care he took to give as little trouble as possible, his whole demeanour, so unassuming, yet so engaging, had won the hearts of all. It was a sad, sad fall. Mrs. Hunt sat down, overwhelmed with astonishment. Betty wrung her hands, in deep distress.

"Oh, Mr. James, Mr. James! Is it yourself that has done this?"

The Messrs. Hunt were sorely confounded; such a result they had not anticipated. They had been highly pleased with his faithfulness and business talents; always in his place, ever attentive to their interests, critically correct in his accounts, and prompt in every duty committed to him, he had won their entire confidence; the present catastrophe was like a thunder-clap with a bright sun and a cloudless sky.

There was yet another witness of that trying scene. She sat silent in a corner of the room, her face covered, while tears were falling, such as lovely woman sheds when her pure and trusting heart meets the cruel thorn where it had hoped to find a holy resting-place.

Young Edwards had stepped up with the rest, to look at the bills: he said nothing, but retiring to a seat, rested his head upon his hand, and seemed overwhelmed by the perilous situation in which he found himself. The officer took the Messrs. Hunt aside, and after some conversation with them, all were requested to leave the room, and the officer and Edwards were left alone together.

"Now, young man, I don't wish to injure you; this matter can all be stopped where it is; you just show me where the the old man's money is, and save all my searching, and yourself a turn in the State's Prison, too; hand me the money, and I'll see you clear in less than no time."

Edwards arose from his seat, and fixed his eye calmly and steadily upon the officer: "I regret exceedingly, sir, that I suffered my feelings so far to control me, and that

"I ought to have done, yield at once to you, and make a search for the stolen money."

"Never mind that; that's nothing; I'm used to such things. Your young blood will show itself—that's neither here nor there; all you have to do now, is just to play down the rest, and I'll have you out of harm's way, as I have said about it."

"I have no desire, sir, to get out of harm's way, you call it: I have no money to give up, nor had I any knowledge of that which you have just found; it is much a mystery to me, as to yourself, how it came there."

"It is no mystery at all to me; and for you to stand there and deny it, is only wasting words. Come, come, I'm too old a hand for you at this game,"—raising his voice, and fixing his eye sternly on Edwards,—"~~show~~ me the rest of that money, if you don't want these prettish wristbands on," at the same time taking out of his pocket a pair of handcuffs; "many a fine fellow has had the same on before you. Come, come, I can't wait."

Had the spirit of young Edwards been about to take its flight into another world, it could scarcely have left more bloodless cheek. The sight of those instruments of degradation was enough; he sank into the chair beside him, helpless as a child.

"Come, come, young man; I'm no fool to be tricked in this way; your theatrical pranks won't go with me. I've seen too many of 'em; I'm in earnest with you—it's your last chance; when I snap this lock, you are done for."

A few moments the officer waited, but James answered not, nor did he make the least resistance, but, submitting to his fate, was led from the room, a manacled culprit.

CHAPTER X.

ON the evening of the eventful day which has been described in the last chapter, everything had settled into quietness in the mansion of Mr. Hunt. James had departed under the care of the officer of the law, and the agonized feelings of the family, if not allayed, were suppressed into silence like that which pervades the house of mourning, when the funeral rites are ended, and those who had been weeping around the grave have returned to their desolate home. Each heart is swelled with emotion, and the words spoken are few, and in accents of peculiar tenderness.

In the parlour, the lamps had not yet been lighted, but the cheerful blaze of the coal fire was sufficient to reveal, with distinctness, every object in the room. Immediately before it sat a female, young and beautiful; she was leaning against the back of her chair, her hands lay folded idly upon her lap, and her feet resting against the small and brightly-polished fender; her light-brown hair was neatly parted from her fair forehead; her eyes, shaded by long, dark lashes, were fixed upon the sporting, flickering blaze, apparently watching the explosions of the bituminous mass; her mouth, which seemed formed for a smile, closely shut, and the upper lip slightly curling, gave a cast

of serious thought which the other features did not betoken. To look upon her now, how unlike the lively, laughing, easy-tempered young lady, whose sprightly step, and cheerful smile, and musical voice, shed such pleasantness and life around this otherwise dull family.

As she sat musing, a knock at the door startled her.

"Oh, dear! I hope there will be no company here this evening."

She then hastily lighted a lamp on the table, left her seat before the fire, removed her chair to a corner, and assuming a becoming attitude, should a stranger enter, was prepared to receive whomsoever it might be.

The door opened, and she perceived that it was no stranger.

"Good evening, cousin Rudolph;" she did not rise from her seat, nor did she greet him with that pleasant smile which was wont, like sunshine, to illumine and adorn her salutation.

"Good evening, cousin Sarah, are you all alone?"

"I have been alone for a short time; I expect uncle and aunt in soon, however."

Rudolph Hunt, for it was he who had entered, helped himself to a chair, and, as he took his seat, put on a smile of complacency.

"I am right glad, cousin Sarah, that I have come in; I think you must be lonesome here."

"It is rather lonesome, this evening," looking steadily at her sewing, which she had taken up on his entrance.

"I thought you would all feel rather down this evening, after what has happened to-day; poor James! who would have thought it?"

Sarah cast her eye from her work ; it glanced from her cousin to the fire, and then settled on her work again. She met his keen, inquiring gaze ; it chilled her heart. She made no reply.

“ Did you see James when he went off ? ”

“ No, I did not. ”

“ I should not like to have seen him, either. James appears to be a good-hearted fellow, although — ”

Sarah looked at her cousin ; but his eye turned not towards her ; he was looking steadily at the fire.

“ Although what, cousin Rudolph ? ”

“ Oh nothing ; only I was going to say, he sometimes appears singular, don’t you think so ? Have you never noticed anything ? ”

“ No, I cannot say that I have. ”

“ Well, I don’t know but I judge wrong ; but he don’t seem to be open—there is something about him you can’t get at. ”

Sarah made no further reply ; in fact, she did not relish the turn which the conversation had taken ; it was manifestly unpleasant to her. Rudolph was her cousin, and, like her, dependent upon the kindness of their uncles. He had been very attentive to her, and she had formerly reciprocated his attentions. As long as he made his home at their uncle’s, she treated him with the utmost kindness ; no sister could have been more obliging, and, although she saw many things in him which she could have wished were otherwise, she passed them over as matters which she could not regulate, never dreaming that Rudolph could ever be anything to her but her attentive gallant, her kind cousin. But Sarah was not one with

whom a young person in Rudolph's situation could well be on such terms of intimacy, and still be so able to control his affections that no interest should be excited for her beyond what a cousin might demand.

There was too much virtuous simplicity, unaffected frankness and noble open-hearted generosity; there was no cold reserve and beauty and mental loveliness, not to suppose a heart less susceptible than his; and, besides, the old Sarah was the darling of her uncle, the younger Rudolph. She was the orphan child of a beloved sister; and he had taken upon himself to educate and support her, and he would be secret of the matter, that "his Sally," as he called her, was to be the heiress of his estate. So her beauty and mental worth, a warm heart, and, doubtless, a generous temper, were all united in this frank, laughing, merry, kindling cousin; and he was not to be blamed for not loving her. But Sarah had not the most distant idea of yielding her heart to one in whose moral integrity she could not confide; and when he had ventured to test the nature of her affection for him, by placing himself in the attitude of a suitor, she at once drew a line between herself and him, strong and well defined.

Rudolph was deeply chagrined at such a result; he was handsome, and he knew it; he had acquired those accomplishments which render youth and a fine person so engaging, and he was a partner in a very flourishing concern, with an almost certain prospect of future wealth. These, he thought, were advantages which few could offer, and which, his vanity prompted him to believe, few could resist. But to Sarah they offered no inducements; her heart recoiled at any intimacy with one whose integrity she doubted.

Whether James Edwards had been, in the least, the cause of Rudolph's discomfiture, I will not pretend to say ; if so, he was the innocent cause. He had never talked of love, nor had he used any arts to gain the heart of Sarah. He did, indeed, enjoy the frequent opportunities afforded him, as a member of the family, of waiting upon her to an evening party, or of conversing with her in the domestic circle. There was a wonderful agreement in all their views, and, of late, a new chord had been struck whose vibrations awoke sensations of peculiar interest within each heart. They had been religiously educated, and Sarah's mother had, with her dying breath, commended her orphan child to the care of a covenant God, and begged, as her last petition, that, whatever else might be her lot, she might be encircled in that blessed covenant which she believed to be well ordered in all things. James, we know, was the darling object for whom a widowed mother's prayers daily ascended before the throne of grace, but it was only within a few months, that he appeared to feel any particular interest in the subject, as a personal matter.

Whether it was that the gentle words which James had ventured to speak, in reference to his own feelings, had affected her, or whether the same cloud whose mercy-drops sprinkled his youthful spirit had also bedewed and softened hers, I cannot say ; but true it was, a congenial feeling possessed them : there was a oneness in their sympathies, of which, perhaps, neither of them was aware, but which was drawing their affections into a close and holy bond.

Sarah had taken her work as Rudolph came in, and plying her needle diligently, seemed more disposed to

in the old city prison, and it makes my heart quake to look at it in the day time, barring going into it; but it's no there you'll catch Betty to-night, nor you, my dear young leddy, neither."

"Why, Betty, I've been thinking a great deal about it, and I cannot rest to-night without seeing him. You know, Betty, that he has no friends to step forward and aid him; his mother and sisters are away; my uncles will not go near him, and Rudolph—"

"Ay, ay, catch him there, my darling—he's no that friend that James thinks for—but, my dear leddy, it's not to the prison that you must go this night; why, your young heart would tremble to hear your own footsteps in the dreary place, let alone the great bolts and the heavy doors, sounding like thunder through the old bare walls; no, no, Miss Sarah, it's no place for you, and the night is dark."

However, Sarah had made up her mind, and Betty had a sincere regard for her, and when she saw that there was danger of Sarah's attempting it alone, she with great reluctance, consented to accompany her, but it was with many crossings of herself, and many ejaculations for mercy on them. "For such an errand no poor woman creatures ever went upon before. Oh, that I was yet to be born! Such a weary world as it is."

But when Betty set about getting ready, she showed clearly that she had her wits about her. She disguised Sarah in some over-garments of her own; and then, stepping into the pantry, gathered up a few choice bits.

"The poor soul might be hungry, and craving a morsel nice to eat."

CHAPTER XI.

It would be difficult to imagine a situation more lamentable than that of James Edwards, as he paced the gloomy apartment to which he had been consigned—the upper west-room of the old city prison. The shades of night had fallen, and the light of the lamps, which glittered upon the great thoroughfare of the city, threw their glimmer into his iron-grated window, and shadowed forth upon the ceiling above, the token of his degradation; he could hear light footsteps of his happy fellow-beings, hurrying past, and the floor beneath would tremble, as the heavy coach rolled by, bearing its gay inmates to some scene of festive enjoyment, or to some cheerful, happy home; none, among that throng, cared for him; a finger might, indeed, be pointed at his prison-house, as the passer-by told of his crime and its detection; but none cared for the anguish that racked his bosom, nor thought of giving consolation to one who had fallen from his integrity, and forfeited his fair fame; perhaps, had they known the story of his past life, there might have been those who would have stepped forward to the rescue, and not have suffered the iron to enter his soul, at least, before he had been allowed an impartial trial. But ah; who was there to tell his story? James felt the sad reality of

all this; the iron gratings and the heavy bars, that shut him from the world, were to his spirit like the torturing rack; not that he cared, now, to be at liberty; it was not the walls of his prison, so bare and cold, nor the bed of straw, nor the darkness and loneliness of his cell; the prison in which his soul was shut up was stronger and gloomier than they. His fair fame was gone; and, until the stain that polluted it was washed away, he must be an outcast. To whom, now, can those helpless ones look for their daily bread; they, with him, have fallen, dependents upon the cold charities of the world.

As these thoughts rioted within his troubled breast, the heavy peals from the bell of an adjoining steeple tolled the hour of the evening; he paused to count their number; he heard footsteps approaching; the key was applied to the door of his room; the heavy bolt flew back, and the keeper entered, followed by two females. Placing a small lamp upon the dark oaken table, and telling them he would return in a quarter of an hour, he retired, turning the key upon them.

The first thought with James was, that the jailer had thrust in two other unfortunate beings like himself to share his cell. The next moment the eye of the lovely Sarah, beaming with emotion, was fixed upon him. She had thrown off the hood and cloak in which she had been disguised, and, as she stood gazing upon him, just as she appeared at home, she seemed like an angel of mercy that had descended to shed some rays of light and hope on his dreary path. James was confounded; his mind had been deeply agitated; he knew not but his reason was departing. He was soon assured, however, that it was no vision; for

Betty had unrobed herself; and stepping up, presented to him some of the dainties of her pantry.

"You'll be remembering these, Mr. James; they're clane as my own hands can make 'em."

"Why, Betty, have you come here?"

"Indeed, and I have; but it's not me that's to be thanked for this turn; it's my dear young leddy, she would come, whether or no."

Sarah had not considered how she would appear, nor how she would feel when in the immediate presence of Edwards; it was the committal of her interest in him to an extent which she did not realise, until Betty's plainness and unsophisticated kindness revealed the secret. She blushed; she even felt the rich crimson suffusing her countenance; and her heart, for the first time, beat with that trembling, suffocating emotion, which accompanies the acknowledgment of reciprocal love. James knew not how to act. His first impulse was to clasp her to his bosom; to tell her that she was dearer to him than life itself; but the thought of his degraded condition, of the humbling scenes he had passed through that day, and which she had witnessed, urged him the next moment to shrink from her sight.

"Oh, Sarah, Sarah!" and he covered his face.

"James," said she, "I suppose I have acted rashly; I have done wrong, but I could not rest. I want to hear, from your own mouth, some account of this strange business."

"You have known and seen too much already."

"But before I can believe, James, that you are guilty, I must hear the acknowledgment from your own lips."

"It will avail but little if I should deny it, so long as the proofs are so strong against me."

"Will it avail nothing, James, to let me know what so deeply concerns you?"

James looked at her with his keen, bright eye, as though he wished to read the secrets of her soul. She shrank not from his gaze; her eye was softened by a tear, and her whole countenance glowed with emotion.

"Sarah, do you believe me innocent?"

"I do—I firmly believe it."

"And so do I, Mr. James—and may the time come when it will be proved so, and your enemies confounded."

James put out his hand, and tenderly taking one of Sarah's, "I thank you most truly for this expression of your confidence; it is indeed the oil of consolation to my wounded spirit. I know not what awaits me, nor through what scenes of trial I am yet to pass, but this act of yours, Sarah, this expression of your confidence will make a prison or a dungeon, light and pleasant. I am innocent, Sarah; and to Him, who knows my heart, who sees every act I do, and every thought that passes through my mind, do I most solemnly appeal, that what I say is true."

Sarah watched his eye as it rose in solemn reverence towards the dwelling-place of Him whose Omniscience he invoked.

"I believe you—I believe you," said she, pressing his hand with both of hers, "but can you not tell who has done it? Can you not get out of this dreadful place? Oh, how long must you be here!"

James shook his head.

"Is there no one whom you suspect?"

"Ah! Sarah, suspicion will not do, and it may be unjust. No, I see nothing before me but infamy, degradation, and ruin; I shall be classed with felons, and stigmatised as a hypocrite, yet I could even bear this, if I could but suffer alone. They, too, must go down with me—must be beggars."

He could say no more—his proud spirit laboured under the oppressive load.

Sarah saw the tender chord which had been touched; her mind sympathised in the trouble that was agitating his, and her noble spirit rose above the little forms, so useful in the common scenes of life; she felt that it was no time to hide the honest feelings of a heart that was bound up in this suffering young man.

"James, your mother and sisters shall be mine. I will do for them what you have done; I am abundantly able; they shall never want."

"Sarah, my own dear Sarah." He clasped her to his bosom. "May God bless you, for ever and ever!"

She shrank not from his embrace, but suffered him to feel, that she willingly yielded the token that she was all his own.

The footsteps of the jailer were now heard approaching.

"James, let us hope in that Being to whom you have appealed this night; He can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves."

Betty was not an unconcerned spectator of the scene which had just passed, but she kept a respectful silence, until she saw Miss Sarah preparing to depart; then, stepping up to James and taking his hand, "Mr. James, may God bless you." James felt that she was placing

something within it; he looked at it; it was a gold eagle.

"No, no, Betty, this must not be; you will rob yourself."

"Not a bit, not a bit: kape it, you dear sowl; the like o' them here won't be aiding you without the help of a little of that," and she turned her back, and as the jailer was waiting, James was soon left to ponder alone on the unexpected vision which had just passed.

Sarah retired to rest that night, but she could not sleep; too many conflicting feelings rioted in her troubled breast; one bright spot alone there was, around which her young affections loved to hover; but dark and troublous clouds kept passing over the beauteous vision. That James was innocent, she now firmly believed; that they mutually loved, she no longer doubted; and when she thought of that brief moment of bliss, that before unknown delight, that *incommunicable* joy of mingling spirits, a rapturous dream seemed to have entranced her. But then the sad realities of a prison gloom, the blasted reputation, the dark uncertainty as to the fate of him she loved, all came upon her mind with painful interest, too painful for her peace.

Was there no friend who could be induced to lend a helping hand to free young Edwards from his prison, and aid him in detecting the villany which, if not found out, must rest with all its killing influence on him, and now, alas! on her? But to whom could she apply? Who would listen to her story? Who would believe, as she did, in the bare assertion of one against whom appearances were now so suspicious, yea, worse than suspicious.

She might be ridiculed for her credulity, but there was little hope that any could be found who would be willing to act upon such a peradventure. The longer she pondered, the darker, the more hopeless, grew the prospect. In the agony of her spirit, she exclaimed, "Oh, had I but a father's bosom, now, on which to repose! to whom I could go for help—a father! And have I not a father? My uncle—yes, he has taken a father's place—he has never denied my childish wishes; I will open my heart to him—I will tell him all."

The morning broke, bright and pleasant, and Sarah would have hailed it with delight, but too many trembling apprehensions were alive within; it was no pleasant task before her, to confide the most sacred secrets even to her fond uncle, who might after all treat her request as a wild phantasy. Dubious as it might be, however, her mind was fixed; a high and holy purpose inspired her with an energy, which no one could have anticipated who saw her in her every day walk; her whole appearance was affected by the strong passion which possessed her soul; the playful smile, that was ever ready with its bewitching power, gave place to a settled sobriety, and her sprightly, dancing step, to one stately, graceful and measured, more in keeping with the current of her feelings.

CHAPTER XII


MR. AUGUSTUS HUNT never refused to attend the summons of his niece, and at an early hour in the forenoon, she arose to meet her affectionate kinsman, as he entered her own private room, in his plain and neat dress of London brown.

"Well, Sally dear," preceded a warm kiss, a good shake of the hand, and a gentle pat on the head; and as he sat down, she took his broad-brimmed beaver, and laid it with care on her little table, and, as quietly and calmly as she could, took her seat in the corner. The old gentleman occupied his usual place immediately before the fire; he sat very erect, with one hand resting on each knee.

"Well, darling, what's the news this morning?—no more robberies, I hope; uncle Geordie feels pretty sore," leaning over towards her, and smiling archly—"but it's no great loss for him, after all."

"I suppose uncle feels tried at losing the money, but the loss of the money is not the worst of it—to lose it in such a singular manner."

"Ay, ay, to be sure, that's it, that's it; you're right—singular, to be sure—strange enough, strange enough; there's something about that business, Sally, puzzles me. I don't see into it," shaking his head.



"You can hardly believe after all, uncle, that James did it?"

"I tell you what, Sally, the longer I live, the harder it is to find out things; there's a wheel within a wheel about this business, somewhere."

"But, uncle, if James is really not guilty, it is a very serious matter for him to be confined in prison, with his character blasted, which you know is all that he has to depend upon; it is worse than death."

"True, true, child, that's true; but the money, you know, or some of it, was found in his trunk, and one of uncle Geordie's papers in his coat pocket, and Rudolph tells strange stories about his gambling, and all that; what to make of it all, I don't know—it's queer, queer."

"Might not James have some enemy who wishes to ruin him, and who knows if his character could be blasted, it would be the most effectual way to destroy him?"

"There is no telling, child, what might be; there are strange things done now-a-days; I sometimes have to look twice, before I can believe my own eyes."

"Well, uncle, I don't believe that James is guilty, and I have good reasons for my opinion."

Her uncle looked at her with his keen and twinkling eye, as though wishing to pry into her secret thoughts.

"And, I believe, uncle, that if you were to see him, you would think so too."

"I wish it may prove so, my dear child; upon my honour, I wish it may, but I am afraid it will go hard with him. Unless he can clearly make it out that some one else did it, there is no help for him."

"Is it not very hard, uncle, if he be innocent, that he

should remain in close confinement, with no friend on earth to aid him, and no power to do anything himself?"

Sarah's voice trembled somewhat, as she said this.

"Remember, uncle, that he is an orphan."

"I know it, my child, I know it; and until this unlucky affair, I would have trusted James with thousands."

"Well, my dear uncle, you can safely trust him still; you must confide in him for my sake;" she drew her chair close to his. "If you knew, my dear uncle, what I have suffered, and what James has suffered—if you could only realise his destitute condition—with none to help him—"

Sarah's feelings were not equal to the task she had undertaken, and the old gentleman could not bear to see her in trouble.

"Well, darling, I see how it is—I see how it is; but what would you have me do?"

"I do not know what should be done, uncle; but I have been very unhappy since yesterday morning, and you know, my dear uncle, that I look to you as a father—you have been a father to me;" and she leaned her head upon his shoulder. Mr. Hunt attempted to answer, but he was a very tender-hearted man, so he took the hand of his niece, and replied by a silent pressure.

"I can only tell you all my heart, and if I have done wrong, uncle, you must forgive me."

She then frankly told him how deeply she was interested in James Edwards, how she had visited him, and how solemnly he had assured her of his innocence.

Mr. Hunt was much agitated during the recital, and had more than once to wipe away the big drops that started to his eyes. He saw plainly enough, that his

niece had run a desperate venture ; but he saw, likewise, that her whole soul was engaged in what to him appeared the very unlikely prospect of Edwards being able to prove his innocence.

"Well, darling, since it is as it is, what would you have me do?"

"Will you not, uncle?"—and she looked full in his face—"won't you become security for James, so that he can be released from that hateful prison until he has his trial? it is only for a few weeks."

"Ay, ay," shaking his head, "I don't know about that ; supposing he should give me leg bail, I should be obliged to pay every cent of it ; uncle Geordie wouldn't let me off a single cent. Ay, ay, I don't know about that."

"I will pledge you my honour, uncle, my sacred honour, that James will do as he promises ; I know he will."

"Sally, Sally, don't you be too sure ; don't you be too confident ; these young men—I don't know about it—they play tricks sometimes."

He saw Sarah appeared hurt.

"However, darling, I shall do as you say ; Edwards shall be free this very day. Will that do, Sally?"

Sarah threw her arms around his neck.

"My uncle, my father, my friend, forgive me all the trouble I have ever caused you—you are too good to me ; I thank you, and James will thank you ; you will be blessed, uncle ; the God of the fatherless will bless you."

"So, so, Sally—so, so ; we'll see pretty soon what can be done. James shall come out of prison, only don't tell uncle Geordie. Bot his old chest, I hope the next time they'll take that along with them."

CHAPTER XIII.

A GREAT change had taken place in the mind of James Edwards since the short interview with Sarah in the cell of his prison. The noble daring of the girl, the avowal of her confidence in him, under such suspicious and degrading circumstances, the interchange of affection, all acted like a charm upon his spirit; those feelings, which were beginning to harden themselves against sympathy, were at once softened; a new stimulus was added to all the other motives, to make exertions for his own rescue from his fallen condition.

But how to unravel the mystery, in what way to shake off the heavy weight which must finally crush him unless removed, and to maintain, before an impartial jury, the innocence which he had made oath to in the ear of that confiding girl, was no trifling matter, and beyond the present power of his mind to compass; wearied at length with his own imaginings, he lay down on his bed of straw and slept; yes, in that cold, dark cell he slept, and awoke not until the light of day was streaming in its fulness through his grated window.

James had but few associates; being naturally of a retiring disposition, and confining himself closely to his duties, he felt but little inclination for mingling in society.

He had, however, one companion with whom he was on terms of great intimacy, whose mind and temper were congenial to his own. Theodore Berry, for that was the name of his friend, had just finished his preparation for the practice of law ; he had promising talent, was fond of the profession he had chosen, and resolved to rise in it without the aid of those grovelling expedients which too many in that noble calling substitute for patient industry and faithful attention to business.

Theodore did not hear of the disaster which had befallen James until the following day. It was in the morning, and while on the way to his office ; he lost no time in going to the place where he was confined, resolved to learn the whole truth.

As the jailer opened the door, he entered, and extending his hand, "Why, James, what does this mean?" James returned his embrace.

"Theodore, I am glad to see you ; I have just been thinking how I should get a message to you."

"I have heard nothing of this, until a few moments since. I was on the way to my office, and met Rudolph ; on inquiring of him how you were ; 'Have you not heard about him since yesterday?' 'No,' I said ; 'what's the matter?' and then he related the circumstances ; but tell me, James, is it so?"

"It is pretty much as Rudolph has told you, but—"

Theodore looked at James with deep concern ; he saw that his eye met his own with the same clear, bright, honest expression it ever had.

"Tell me, Edwards, there is some mistake ; you are—
—you are—you have not done this, James, have you?"

"No, Theodore, I have not."

"Thank God for that ; but sit down, and tell me all about it."

"I can tell you no more than you already know ; but I think Rudolph has given you rather the worst features of the case."

James then told his friend exactly what had happened.

"But what is the story about your gambling ? surely Rudolph must be mistaken."

"Gambling !—does he charge me with gambling ?"

"Why, he says that is the common report ; that you were seen entering a gambling-house the other evening—the worst in the city."

James appeared much astonished.

"Is it possible that so much has been made out of a mere accident ?"

"Tell me, James"—and Theodore took his hand and pressed it, "tell me, it is not so ; you have not gambled."

"No, never ; the circumstance might have been forgotten by me, if you had not mentioned that I was seen going into a certain house. I did go into one, but it was by mistake ;" and he explained to Theodore how it happened.

"Glad, glad am I, James, that none of this is true. But how has all this taken place ? There is something more than accident in it ; there has been some design, some deep design to ruin you, and whoever has done it has taken a course that will make it very difficult for you to clear yourself ; the whole of this unfortunate business rests upon you as the guilty person."

"I know it."

"Is there no one whom you suspect? Is Rudolph friendly to you?"

James shook his head. "Rudolph has been very kind to me; I have no reason—I ought not to think of him in a suspicious manner."

"Edwards, I must be frank: you have no friend in Rudolph Hunt. The manner in which he spoke of you this morning convinces me of this. Depend upon what I say, he's a—"

"Stop, stop, Theodore!"

But Theodore would not stop until he had obtained from James every particular respecting his intimacy with Rudolph, which might throw light upon the nature of his feelings towards him, all of which he minutely recorded.

"And now, James, what is your plan? It will not do for you to be cooped up here; you must be at liberty, and endeavour to ferret out this matter, and you have but a short time to prepare."

Just then they were interrupted by a bustling in the passage, and Edwards thought he heard the voice of Mr. Augustus Hunt. The door was opened.

"Bless my soul! what a place! what a place! it ain't fit for a dog to be in! Why, James, James, bless me! this is a bad business; sorry, sorry." The old gentleman stepped up kindly and offered his hand, and then casting his eye around the room, over the walls, and at the grated window, "Terrible, terrible! How did the hussy dare to come to such a place? But she's just like her mother."

James blushed deeply, and Theodore observed it, but

as nothing had been said to him of the intimacy between James and Sarah, it was all a mystery to him.

"Well, well, Master James, I'm sorry, sorry; things are in a bad state here, bad enough—this won't do—and you an innocent man too—hey?" And he looked with his keen, bright, twinkling eye fixedly at James.

James felt the intensity of his gaze, but he shrank not from it; he knew that an answer was required from him, but he could not speak.

"I believe, sir, that Mr. Edwards is innocent," said Theodore, "but it will do him little good to have the mere opinion of his friends as to his innocence; he must have positive proof that some one else put that money into his trunk."

"Just so, just so; that's the rub, as I understand it."

"The best thing his friends can do for him is to get him out of confinement, and unite with him in endeavouring to search out the villain."

"That's just my mind, and, to tell you the truth, Master James, that's what I've come for this morning—so let's set about it."

"Mr. Hunt, I am well aware that appearances are against me; I have no friends to whom I could apply, under the circumstances, as surety for my appearance, and—"

"How do you know, Master James? how do you know but I would—I would—do it myself? I guess they will take Augustus Hunt's bond for 6,000 dollars."

James could not reply; it was unexpected; the tear gathered in his eye, and his whole expression told the deep feelings of his heart. Mr. Hunt had his own feel-

ings, too; the scene through which he had just passed with his niece had left a strong impression on his kind heart, and now called to witness the degradation of one, whom he had seen daily attending faithfully to his duties in his own counting-room, and under his own direction, whose whole deportment had ever won his admiration and esteem, he could wait no longer, so, with a quick step, he left the room, telling James that he would be back presently.

Hardly had James time to recover from the surprise which Mr. Hunt's kindness had caused, when the door was again opened, and the jailer, bowing complacently, told Mr. Edwards that he was no longer his prisoner; requesting him at the same time to step down into the room below. He was overcome. Theodore grasped his hand.

"Come, James, put on courage; keep up a good heart; you have friends yet." And, taking his arm, he led him, almost unconscious, to the room where Mr. Hunt was waiting for him.

The old gentleman arose as he entered, and shook hands with him again.

"Ah, give me light and air—none of your pent-up places for me. Bless me! I felt as if I could not breathe."

"Mr. Hunt, your kindness is more than I could have hoped for." Theodore just then left the room, saying that he would return in a few moments. No sooner were they alone than Mr. Hunt assumed the serious air which he always had when business of importance was on hand.

"James, you are now free, until your case shall have

been fairly tried. Are you aware of what I have done to accomplish it?"

"I am, sir, and—"

"Well, you are aware, then, that this is done in reliance on your honour; for I must tell you, James, I have yet confidence in your integrity."

The spirit of the young man, almost broken by his trial, felt, sweetly felt, the warm and cheering words of this aged friend.

"Nor am I the only one who believes you innocent; nor am I the only one who will suffer if you should prove untrue. You understand me."

James answered not; his heart was full to overflowing, and his face was covered to hide emotions he could not suppress.

"There is one, young man, as dear, yes, dearer to me than life itself. You know well whom I mean. Her reason, her earthly hopes, her life itself, hang on the truth or falsehood of your character;" and his voice trembled, as he spoke it in a low but most emphatic tone.

James raised his head, his countenance beaming forth the strong feelings at work within his breast.

"Mr. Hunt, I know well what you mean, and to whom you allude; I am well aware that the prospect before me is dark; I know that to prove my innocence may be beyond my power; but, sir, there is a God above, the Being whose blessing I invoke, whose wrath, above all things else, I fear; sure as He lives, and so long as my reason shall regulate my actions, will I prove true to her—will I be true to you."

"This is a solemn oath which you have taken, James ;

may you be able to keep it. There is one thing more I wish to say : it will not do for me to be known as actively aiding you ; nor must it be known that I have been here. I have procured a friend, who has given his name instead of mine. My brother believes in your guilt ; and, to be frank with you, I fear that Rudolph helps him to believe so. Here is a trifle, James ; more shall be ready at your need. Employ the best counsel, and may God help you out ; for, if you are not cleared, Sarah's heart will be broken, and—”

The old man could say no more. He took the hand of the young man, and, pressing it in silence, left the room.

CHAPTER XIV.

How strong the contrast which is often presented between the moral and the natural world! The skies cloudless and bright, and the earth smiling in sunshine and loveliness, while the heart is sick, and the soul looks forth with beamless eye upon the fair creation.

It was a fine, brisk morning; the sun had not yet risen; all the bright rays which shot up from behind the eastern hills betokened the coming of the strong man to run his race. It was just such a morning as wakes up within the heart its warmest energies; every nerve is quickened by the frosty air, and the toils, the trials, and the dangers of the coming day are looked forward to not only with calm courage but almost with a longing for the stern encounter.

At the door of the Parsonage a respectable-looking barouche had just driven up, and a small man, well wrapped in a stout overcoat, was standing by the steps which he had thrown down, and holding by one hand the open door. His face was turned towards the group that was approaching by the little path which led to the front gate. As the gate opened, he lifted his hat high up from his head, bowed very low once or twice, and, in a voice that was scarcely audible, thus accosted the company:—

"Your servant, ladies; Mr. Wharton, good morning."

The voices which responded were in broken tones, and the countenances of the ladies plainly told that they had been yielding to the power of sorrow.

Mr. Wharton replied in his usual placid manner, "A fine morning, Mr. Tightbody; you are very punctual, sir."

Mr. Tightbody bowed low to this remark of the reverend gentleman, but made no other reply. As the ladies, followed by Mr. Wharton, entered the carriage, the steps were folded up, and the door closed in the most careful manner. There was no prancing of the horses, nor cracking of the whip; but off they moved steadily, as though fully aware of the feelings of their master.

"How long a drive do you intend this morning? Shall we reach the Point in time for the afternoon boat, Mr. Tightbody?"

"The morning boat, Mr. Wharton—the morning boat, sir." This was said in a low voice. "They can take us there, sir, in three hours," pointing to his horses; "but I suppose it would not be altogether the thing *to-day*, sir."

Mr. Wharton did not reply. He could not, just then, comprehend the reasoning of his good neighbour, or perhaps the latter part of the remark was unheard, so low were the tones in which it was delivered. The road wound through a country beautifully variegated with woods, and open meadows, and snug farm-houses nestling in quiet beneath their guardian monarchs of the forest, and little brooks that sparkled cheerily by the wayside, and through the distant field. On every spot.

the eye could reach, some new striking beauty was undisturbedly shown that stole with silent power to the heart, bidding man to come and rest his tired spirit, and to forget the fearful and distracting struggle of the world. But in mourners in that carriage it was not to be seen. No lovely scene in Nature could ever have been seen from the terrible realities which then surrounded them.

And when, especially, did these realities come before him? With a strong interest, for his larger experience had taught him to anticipate with more distinctness than most the scenes in the troublous scene to which they were about to go. He was an eye-witness of the degradation of the world, and to him by associations of the most terrible kind to lead this mother and sister into the dark interior-house, and hear their cry of agony as they mingled their lamentations with the fallen one; to hear, and to see, a tale of misdoings that began at first in a slight deviation from the path of rectitude, increasing in enormity until the step was taken that can never be retracted, and the dark blot made that can never be washed away, either by penitence or tears; to behold a youth of active promise and high hopes dashed by his own mad folly, a hopeless victim, upon those dark shores where the wretched must for ever wander unpitied and unblest; his heart recoiled from the sad prospect, and deeply sympathized with those helpless ones beside him who could only mourn, hopelessly mourn, over the ruin of their dearly loved stay.

As Mr. Tightbody had said, they were in time for the evening boat, and had an hour at least to spare; for as



they drove up to the tavern at the landing, the white sail of the small vessel, which in those primitive days answered the turn of the public, was seen at some distance rounding the point which formed one of the boundaries of the little bay which spread before them, and across which she must make her way against a head wind.

“ We shall have a full hour to spare, Mr. Tightbody ; I shall order dinner for the ladies, and you will not need to be in haste to return ; stay and dine with us.”

A very low bow and suitable acknowledgments followed this address of Mr. Wharton.

The meal was soon in readiness, and the little party sat down and ate in silence.

There was soon a bustle in the adjoining bar-room, and Mr. Timothy came at once to a halt, and started from the table.

“ Don’t rise, ladies ; be seated, Mr. Wharton. I will see that everything is on board.”

Scarce had the little man closed the door which opened immediately into the bar-room, when he sprang back, and looking and beckoning very earnestly—

“ Mr. Wharton, Mr. Wharton, quick, sir, if you please.”

The little circle was somewhat alarmed, for the countenance of Mr. Tightbody was very animated, and his words came out full and naturally. No sooner was Mr. Wharton in the bar-room, than his hand was violently grasped.

“ Mr. Wharton ! how is my mother ? ”

“ James ! James ! is it possible ! is this you ? The Lord be praised ! ”

He immediately led him one side.

"It is not true, then?"

"Mr. Wharton, has my mother heard anything about me?"

"She has, James; but it is not true?"

"Is my mother here, sir?"

"She is."

Mr. Wharton at once led him into the room.

"My dear son!"

"My dear mother!"

And they were locked in each other's arms.

"James! my brother! my dear brother!" And Mary threw her arms around his neck.

"Oh, James! how is it? what is it? it is not true? But you look as if you had been in trouble. O my son! tell me, James, you are innocent, are you not?"

"Yes, mother, I am innocent, but I may not be able to prove it."

"I knew it, mother, I knew it; I told you that James was innocent—my own dear brother." And she kissed him again and again.

"But tell us, James, how has this come to pass? Is the account which we have received in the paper correct? Have you been imprisoned?"

And his mother and sister looked at him as though their life depended on his answer.

"It is true, sir; I have been imprisoned."

"Oh, brother! brother!" And Mary hid her face and wept bitterly.

"But yet you say you were innocent, my son?"

"Yes, mother, as innocent as that lovely child. Don't

weep, dear sister. It is the hand of God. It is for good in some way. Do not weep so, Mary."

"O my brother! my brother! if I could only have been with you. To think of you alone, and in prison, and not a friend near you!"

"God has raised up friends for me, dear sister—warm and true."

"I knew it; I have felt it; I have believed that He would not suffer the child of my prayers to leave the path of righteousness, and bring me with sorrow to the grave."

Mr. Tightbody now ventured to open the door sufficiently to show his face, lighted up with a new and bright expression.

"Come in, Mr. Tightbody—come in, sir; things are better than we feared."

"God be praised, sir, for that; but I came in to inquire;" and he bowed very low, as he said this, "Does the Reverend and the ladies still design to go by the boat? the things are all aboard."

All looked to James for an answer.

"I am on my way to our home, mother, and design to spend a day or so with you."

"Then we will all return, sir."

It was some little distance to the boat, and Mr. Tightbody started with an agility that would have done credit to a boy of sixteen; but sometimes our haste does mischief; the landlord was not only a very fleshy little man, he was also sorely afflicted with the gout. Just as Mr. Timothy was flying out of the bar-room door, the old man was turning from his piazza to enter. There was a loud

wail, and both bodies were laying at the foot of the steps together. The dogs barked, the women ran out of the kitchen and screamed at the top of their voices, and the old man swore horrible oaths, intermingled with cries of agony; at the same time holding Mr. Timothy in his grasp, and endeavouring to wreak upon him the vengeance that was boiling in his heart.

"I'm a dead man; he's murdered me; hold him fast; send for Squire Pearce; I'll have him in jail, that I will."

But Mr. Timothy, of the two, had the greater cause for complaint; he certainly was much the worse for the encounter. The old man in his spite had clawed without mercy, tearing ruffles, pulling off buttons, and even leaving marks on Mr. Timothy's round, plump visage, that were calculated to make him far too conspicuous under the present circumstances. But as Pomp could not be blamed for the present mishap, Mr. Timothy was obliged to smother his feelings, and bear his trial as he best could.

How very different did the beauties of nature appear to the little company as they travelled back through the same scenes they had passed in the morning! Their hearts could now appreciate them; the dark mist that had lain so heavily upon their warm affections had passed away. James was by their side, not, indeed, secure from calamity, but restored to their confidence. His word was truth to them, and, come what might, they could still look upon him as pure and faithful.

The sun was about to set as they reached the door of the Parsonage. Julia was the first to greet them; she saw her brother.

"Oh, there is James!" She flew to his arms, she asked not whether he was innocent or guilty; he was there, and that was enough.

"Oh, James, James! brother, brother!" She clung to his neck, and kissed him again and again.

CHAPTER XV.

THE uncertainty which hung over the fate of young Edwards was not in the least diminished by any circumstances that had transpired since the morning of his arrest; but even the probabilities that he would be able to clear himself grew less and less as the period of his trial approached. His friends, those who thought they knew him, had no doubt of the truth of his professions, but their good opinion could avail him nothing in a court of justice, where evidence, and that alone, must guide the decision.

Theodore was untiring in his efforts to prepare for the hour of trial. He saw the difficulties in the case, but the strong friendship he bore to Edwards, and his desire to distinguish himself in this, his first effort at the bar, stimulated him to the utmost. He had taken the responsibility, without hope of fee or reward, but he was not without aid; through the liberality of Mr. Augustus Hunt he was enabled to command the services of an eminent lawyer. It required, however, assistance of a different kind to ferret out the mystery of iniquity, and he was determined to seek it. At the close of a very busy day, he left his office, and sought the upper part of the city; his mind, deeply agitated, he passed along the crowded

thoroughfare without heeding the multitudes who were urging their way homeward. Not far above the New York hospital he left the throng, turned down a quiet street, and soon came to a plain two-storey dwelling.

He was introduced into a small back room.

"Good evening, Mr. Catchem. I am fortunate in finding you at home."

The officer arose from his seat before the fire, gave one sharp glance at his visitor, and, without saying a word, placed a chair for him near the corner, at the same time removing his own in an opposite direction.

"Sit down, sit down, sir; a raw evening."

"Rather a chilly air; but I have walked fast, for I was very anxious to see you, and was not certain how far over the city I might be obliged to travel before I found you."

"They keep me jogging; I was just about to take a stretch over east of the Bowery; the boys think they have got track of the fellows that set fire to the buildings in Front-street last night."

"Were those buildings set on fire?"

"No doubt."

"I wish to say a few words to you, sir, about young Edwards, who was arrested a short time since, you remember, at Mr. Hunt's."

"Ay, ay, I remember him."

"We have every reason to think that Mr. Edwards is an innocent person, and that some one has laid a plan to ruin him. We have no doubt of it."

"Nor I, neither."

"Then you do not believe that he is guilty?"

his statements, which he never had before. To Sarah he was not only as he had ever been, and carefully avoided every topic which he found unpleasant. As she no longer took him as a suitor, and as it was so evident to her that the views of Randolph were agreeable to her relations, she at least demanded that she should be treated as a daughter. Randolph had peculiar views of the most exalted kind. His advantages were all-sufficient to Sarah had, indeed, manifested Edwards, but even here he was made solely for the superior and address which James possessed would be nothing now: the character would for ever cut off all fear of dangerous rival.

Advantages he was sufficiently conscious. Their mutual friends, the protectors of these, he founded a strong hope on his own personal bearing towards him. He meant the prize he had so long struggled for; he meant to secure it while he could.

He was deeply engaged that afternoon in an interview with his kind uncle, Mr. Augustus Hunt. It had been of much trial to her; many unpleasant remarks had reached the ears of her kinsman, and he felt bound to let his niece know everything pertaining to the character of one in whom she was so deeply interested. In fact, he wished to prepare her mind for a trial which he much feared was inevitable—the conviction of Edwards, with strong evidence against him.

Scarcely had she dried the tears to which she had given full vent after the affectionate parting kiss and "God bless you, darling," of her uncle, when Betty came into her room, with a countenance highly flushed, and under great excitement.

"What is it, Betty?"

"The Lord only knows, my young leddy, but I fear there is trouble in the wind for you."

"Tell me, Betty; anything about James?"

"Well, indeed, my dear leddy, I fear he has something to do forment it."

"Sit down, Betty, and compose yourself; you seem to have been much disturbed—sit down."

"I can't sit, Miss Sarah, for she has put me into such a rumble, that I'm all in a quake."

"She?—who?—is it my aunt?"

"Oh, no, bless your young heart! I don't mind the like o' her—she ay grumbles awhile, and then it's all over; but what do you think, my darling? Just as I had claned up the dinner-things, and was going out with a pail of rubbish for that ould scape-gallows, the bell-man, I had emptied my pail, and was casting my eyes around to see what might be going on in the street, when I see'd a young woman, natelly and dacently dressed, stopping just at our door, and looking as though she might be wanting to enter. 'May I know your will, madam?' says I. 'Can you tell me,' says she, 'does Mr. Edwards live here?' 'Faith,' said I, 'and I can't say but he does—or he did, not long ago.' 'Has he removed from here, then?' 'Not exactly moved,' said I, 'but he's not here at present.' 'When do you expect him again?' said she.

‘That’s hard to say, madam,’ said I. The more I looked at her, my leddy, the more my thoughts began to trouble me, and so says I, ‘Maybe you’ll walk in a bit and rest you, and perhaps I’ll be after finding out when he may be back, and the like o’ that.’ I thought I’d spake her fair, Miss Sarah, for there was no telling what might come of it.”

“And did she come in, Betty?”

“Faith and she did, and she’s waiting down there a bit, for I told her that I might, may be, get word about Mr. Edwards; but oh, Miss Sarah! Ochone, ochone!”

Sarah could not well comprehend the cause of Betty’s alarm, but was resolved to see for herself.

“I will go down with you, and see her; is she in the parlour, Betty?”

“In the parlour, indeed, ma’am! No, no, it’s not into the parlour that Betty would be takin’ the like of her; the kitchen is too good for her, if my guess is right. Ochone, ochone! what a world it is!”

Sarah immediately descended into Betty’s sanctum—no very uncomfortable place either, for it was kept with great neatness. The young woman arose as Sarah entered, and made a slight, but respectful obeisance to her. She was, as Betty had said, neatly and decently dressed, although there might have been some few little things rather showy, and in too strong contrast with her principal garments; not more so, however, than is frequently witnessed upon those who have not been trained to a nice observance of uniformity. Her countenance was agreeable, and the expression of it, together with her deport-

ment, was modest. Sarah saw nothing that had any appearance of impropriety.

"You will please excuse the liberty, but I am very anxious to see Mr. Edwards, and perhaps you can inform me where he is, and how I could find him?"

"I cannot inform you where he is at present."

"Is not this his home?"

Sarah blushed deeply as she answered—

"Yes—or at least it has been his home; but circumstances have called him away just now."

"And you don't know where he has gone?"

"No, not positively. Must you see him yourself, or could we send your message to him?"

"Excuse the liberty; are you his sister?"

"No, I am not; his relatives do not reside in the city."

The young woman was evidently much affected by this uncertain intelligence, and seemed hesitating whether to depart or make some further disclosures. Sarah witnessed her embarrassment.

"Perhaps you would wish to see me alone?"

"I should be glad to, Miss, a few moments."

Sarah at once led her up the stairs, while Betty, not at all reconciled to the visitor by anything she had heard, clasped her hands together, turned her eyes towards the ceiling, and poured out a string of exclamations, which, probably, had the effect of relieving her mind, for she immediately went to work at her household duties.

Sarah led the young woman into her own apartment, and as soon as she was seated—

"I fear you will not be able to see Mr. Edwards at

present. He is in great trouble ; perhaps you have heard of it ?”

“ I have not ; in fact, I am not personally acquainted with Mr. Edwards, and it is not on my own account that I have called. But a young friend of mine, Gertrude—or, as we call her, Gitty—Williams, a niece of Mr. Upjohn’s, is in great trouble. Perhaps you have heard Mr. Edwards speak of her ?”

“ I have often heard him speak of Mr. Upjohn’s family, and I think I have heard him mention a niece of theirs of whom they were very fond.”

“ She is now at our house. She is very unwell, and I fear will not live, and she has a great desire to see Mr. Edwards ; and if you can, in any way, direct me to him, you will do a great kindness to a poor, suffering girl.”

Sarah was silent a few moments ; a multitude of strange thoughts oppressed her :

“ I cannot, certainly, direct you to Mr. Edwards, nor do I know if he is in the city ; but could I do any good by calling myself upon the young woman ? I can tell her some things about Mr. Edwards that may be satisfactory to her. I am no relative of his, but we are on terms of great intimacy ; he has long been a member of our family. Do you think she would be unwilling to see me ?”

“ She would not be unwilling to see you, I am sure, and it might be a satisfaction to her, if she cannot see him, to converse with you.”

Sarah took the direction which the young woman gave, and then waited upon her to the door.

It was near candle-lighting, and as her uncle and aunt were to be absent that evening, she entered the parlour,

and, placing a lamp upon the tab'e, laid her work beside her.

She was glad to be alone, that she might ponder upon the dark and troublous events that were gathering around her. The interview with her uncle Augustus on that day, had been one of trying interest. His affectionate treatment, his deep concern for her, was so marked, that she could not mistake its meaning, and yet it had left an impression of sadness that almost sunk her young and elastic spirits. He had felt it his duty to open before her all the dark features in the case that was so near her heart; he could see no bright spot in the aspect of circumstances which surrounded James; he had poured out freely of his means to command all the aid necessary to enable him to ward off the terrible calamity which he saw was coming fast and sure. But he could not bear the thought, that his "Sally" should be so connected with the fate of Edwards, that one blow must destroy them both; and in his love for her, he had ventured to suggest the propriety of her breaking the tie which had bound them together. She had taken it kindly, for she knew that it was kindly meant.

And now, as she sat alone, all that he had said came back with painful freshness, and across her young mind dark visions were passing, which would have filled one less determined with the gloom of despair.

She heard a knock at the street-door, and knew it to be that of her cousin Rudolph. It did not, as once, cause uneasy sensations; in fact, he was of late such a constant visitor, that he had almost become, as formerly, a member of the family.

His treatment of Sarah was with marked kindness ; he had forbore to say anything in reference to the affairs of James Edwards, as he saw that it was a topic unpleasant to her ; or if mention was made of them in his presence, he manifested such an interest for his fate, and commiseration for his misfortunes, that he had effectually succeeded in softening her feelings, and removing her former prejudices against him. She was conscious of having indulged this prejudice ; it might be wrong, and therefore she had endeavoured to drive it from her. They were both orphans, and alike dependent upon the kindness of their friends ; they had been children together ; his manners were pleasing, and as she knew that his freedom of intercourse with the family was gratifying to her uncle and aunt, it was but her duty to treat him with that attention which her place in the house demanded.

How often in the discharge of a duty, at first unpleasant, a change comes over our feelings ; we lose our disrelish, and like what was once distasteful.

Rudolph had only changed in appearance ; how much he loved Sarah, it would be difficult to say ; but a strong feeling had taken possession of his mind, that led him to use every means in his power to gain her hand.

It was not because his affections, such as they were, had become interested in her, nor was it because she had in prospect a handsome fortune ; neither love nor avarice was the ruling power that stimulated him in the pursuit.

He could not bear the thought that a rival should interpose a claim to an object which his heart desired ; the fire that burned within his bosom was kindled from

the altar of self ; it blazed with the fury of fiendish intensity, and wrapped his soul in its hellish embrace.

It is a melancholy task, no matter to whose lot it may fall, to open the heart of the bad man, and unfold its hidden evils ; to see through every avenue and secret cloister there, the slimy trail of that reptile whose coil is around every passion, and whose forked tongue plays in fearful malignity against every intruder that would ennoble or bless the soul—that hideous monster Self, who suffers no feeling of the heart to go out towards another, and allows no warm and trustful love to enter from another ; who wants no sweets of friendship, no interchange of true affection, no cordial grasping of the heart. Its own peculiar designs, its own unhallowed cravings, are alone to be gratified, should love, and hope, and confidence, and friendship's purest thoughts be crushed and ruined.

As Rudolph entered, a smile was on his countenance ; he was dressed with peculiar neatness, and there was a confidence in his address which plainly told, that he knew the external man was as it should be. Sarah could not but notice his manner and appearance, and she could not really find fault with either. He was certainly a gentleman, and a fine-looking young man. Almost glad to be relieved from the maze of her troubled thoughts, she met his salutations with kindness. Gifted with colloquial powers, Rudolph found no difficulty in bringing forward topics that were pleasing ; his remarks were just, and corresponded with her own views ; she could not but coincide, and seemed to be rather pleased that such an agreement subsisted.

Occasionally, in spite of her sadness, a smile would be forced from her: she could not help it; nor did she even wish to restrain it. The more like her former self she appeared, when she was his little laughing cousin, the more did he feel the quickening influence of hope. He went back to their days of childhood, and talked of their old homes, and of the parents they had followed to the tomb. Sarah's feelings were just in a state to be excited by a view of childhood's happy hours, and a parent's trustful bosom; and she wept. Rudolph drew nearer to her; he took a corner of the work which lay upon her lap, and on which one of her hands rested.

"Sarah, why cannot we be friendly?"

"I hope we are friends, cousin Rudolph."

"There has not been for some time that cordiality in our intercourse, Sarah, which perhaps there might have been. If I have been in fault, I ask your forgiveness; will you forgive me, Sarah?"

Sarah's tears flowed more freely.

• "I have nothing to forgive, cousin Rudolph: you have, certainly, ever been kind to me."

"I have ever felt kindly, Sarah; and if you knew how many unhappy hours I spend on your account, perhaps you would feel that I have stronger claims to your friendship than you now do."

"I do not wish you or anyone to be unhappy on my account, I am sure, cousin Rudolph."

"Is it kind to feel, or to speak thus, Sarah? Must I be forbidden even to sympathise with you?"

"Oh, no, cousin Rudolph, by no means; I did not intend to intimate that."



Sarah gave fresh vent to her tears, and Rudolph saw his advantage; he took her hand.

"Sarah, I must intreat of you to listen to me a moment—I love you most truly; but I do not mean to trouble you on that point. It is not for my own sake I ask you to listen to me; it concerns your own interest, your own well-being. I know well, why it is that my presence has become distasteful to you; I will not blame you for not loving me; but I ask you to pause—hate me if you will—but pause before you plunge into the gulf before you."

Sarah withdrew her hand, and wiping away the tears that had been freely flowing—

"What gulf do you mean, cousin Rudolph?"

"You surely cannot mistake my meaning, Sarah; you know that you have allowed James Edwards to feel that he had full command of your heart. I once thought well of James, as you now do; but now I know what you do not, or you would sooner trust the adder that lies coiled at your feet, and take it to your bosom, than you would trust that young man."

Sarah started as though the adder was, indeed, near to her.

"Cousin Rudolph, the time has been when your warning might have alarmed me. That time has passed. If James Edwards falls, I fall with him."

"Then fall you must; for his fate is sure as the setting sun. He is and must be an outcast for ever. O Sarah, listen to me—listen to reason; do not, my dear cousin, persist in clinging to a connexion that can only bring disgrace to you and all connected with you. You are

bound by no human or Divine tie; and no principles of honour demand from you any adherence to one who has forfeited his rank in society."

Sarah turned upon him her soft, bright eyes, now sparkling with deep emotion.

"Cousin Rudolph, no human law, indeed, binds me to that unfortunate young man, and perhaps no principles of honour may; but you little know my heart, when you attempt to move it by such arguments. James Edwards is innocent; yes, Rudolph, he is innocent, as you are, of the crime alleged against him." Sarah saw the crimson burning his brow as she said this. "And you know that he is innocent." Rudolph's eyes flashed with indignation. "But be he as guilty as you pretend to believe, I will cling to him with all his errors, with all his disgrace, and die with him."

Rudolph was about to answer, but there was something in the holy emotion that glowed in Sarah's countenance which checked him. A knock at the front door announced the return of their uncle and aunt, and as soon as he could with propriety, after they entered the room, he retired.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE evils which come upon us in this life are, in most cases, the result of our own folly or weakness. We take the first rash step, or we allow the Evil One to get his insidious hold, and then return is not so easy, nor can the ensnarer be driven off, but, it may be, by the prostration of our dearest hopes.

Mr. Upjohn was what many would have called a stern man, and yet, as we have seen, he could not at the proper time, and when a wise denial might have prevented much evil, say nay to the little laughing girl whom he had adopted as his own.

As her years advanced, the power which he once had to restrain and regulate her actions grew weaker. She had done her own bidding when a child, and it was not to be expected, as she grew to womanhood, that she would easily resign her untamed will.

The intimacy which Rudolph Hunt had formed with the family was not long pleasing to Mr. Upjohn. He was, to be sure, an engaging companion for an evening's entertainment ; he was polite in his behaviour, and had a fund of anecdote that excited many a merry laugh on the part of Gitty, and even made the brow of her uncle relax its sober cast. But when the heart is unsound, it is very

difficult so to cover it that its corruption shall not at times break forth.

Mr. Upjohn was too shrewd a man not to notice these symptoms, and they filled him with alarm. Again and again during the long evenings when she would be away, had he held counsel with his wife, and intreated her to use her maternal influence to win their Gitty from the fascination which had been thrown around her. But she, poor, easy soul! had long lost her control, and for her to remonstrate was only adding fuel to the fire.

Distracted, at length, with troubled thoughts, the old man resolved to use that power which he fondly believed he yet held over this beloved one for her good.

He had a long conversation with Gitty, and plainly and fearlessly unfolded to her what he believed to be the character of Rudolph, and intreated her, by all the regard which she professed for those who had performed the part of parents to her, to act upon the warning which he gave her. Gitty wept bitter tears, for the earnestness and kindness of her uncle went to her heart; but when he closed his address by telling her that unless she wished to forfeit his good will, she must at once relinquish all the attentions of the young man, and that if she ever ventured abroad with him again the doors of her home should be closed against her for ever, the strong, uncurbed, impetuous will of Gitty rose up, and placed within her own heart an impenetrable barrier against the wish of her uncle.

She dried her tears, and, without making a reply, retired to her little room. That very evening an appointment had been made, and when Rudolph called, she

asked no questions, nor did she deign to give her aunt any information as to whither she was going.

Gitty retraced her steps that evening, with the full determination to ask pardon of her friends, and submit herself to their control as she had never done before. Her heart was pure ; her love for Rudolph was based upon virtuous principles ; she had never seen the dark spots which had been so visible to her uncle. That evening the monster was revealed to her in all his odiousness, and she turned from him with fear and loathing, but with all her young affections blasted. Her heart had been cherishing its warmest feelings, and holding them in sacred keeping for the time when his acknowledgment of love, pure and virtuous love, should enable her to pour them forth into his bosom—a priceless treasure. Mortified and indignant, she sought, alone, her uncle's dwelling ; the little gate opened to her touch, but the light which had always twinkled from the window where her uncle sat was gone. A thrill of terror at once oppressed her ; she had not believed that his threat would be executed. She sat down upon the little stoop, and wept such tears as she had never shed before : and there she remained through the long damp hours of the night ; once, indeed, she tried to raise the latch, but the door was fastened, and no one gave any sign that she was heard.

As the night went on, its chills penetrated her frame. She wrapped her light covering about her, as she best could, but it was a frail protection. The morning at length dawned ; the cold had chilled her very heart, and its beating seemed about to cease. But colder and fainter

was the national character of which her wedding ring was a symbol. Jack was tall and handsome, with the large white teeth, the perfect complexion, and every mark of health which a man carries within his smiling heart and countenance. As he lay with his arm round her, and with his strong arms pressed round her waist, she looked the little girl and clinging back from a pressing gaze upon the face and form. Her past sorrow life was all before her. I was transformed in every word, and deed, and sigh. Every day of her transformed existence had been spent there, and all her thoughts and feelings from childhood to that hour. All met her gaze; all that, in times that struck a deadly chill upon her heart than the cold night air had done, farewell. She felt that it was for ever.

As her friend Lydia was the only one to whom she could think of applying for shelter, she made the best of the worst chance. Lydia had ever loved Gitty, but perhaps a friend with more discretion, and less of that lightness which leads the young to acts of folly, might have been better, might have changed the tenor of her life, and made her what her beautiful person and her lively affections once promised for her. But the past is gone, and all that Gitty could say, as her friend met her with a look of pain and surprise, was—

"Lydia, can you let me lie down on a bed? for I fear I am very ill."

And there she lay, with her senses fully awake to the folly of the past, and the misery of her present condition. Pain would she have flown to those dear old friends who had nourished her with so much tenderness, but that was

now impossible ; and her only desire was, that they might come to her ; for she wished to tell them how wrong she had been, and ask their forgiveness before she died. The parents of Lydia were aged and infirm ; they were comfortably off, but unable to stir abroad. Lydia had incurred the displeasure of Mr. Upjohn, and did not dare to venture on an errand to him. In her extremity, Gitty had thought of James Edwards as one who, of all others, would have influence with her uncle, and for this purpose Lydia had gone to the house of Mr. Hunt, and, as we have seen, had an interview with Sarah.

When Mr. Upjohn fastened the door of his house that evening, and extinguished the light, and laid him down on his bed to rest, it was with a sadder heart than he had ever experienced before. His feelings, naturally, were of the warmest, most tender kind ; but his will was of that determined character that, when once fixed, all the passions of his soul must bend to it. He had gone resolutely forward under its iron sway, and barred his home against the only object, beside his faithful wife, who had, for many years, engrossed his affections.

He had told her his determination, and come what might, his word should not be broken. Alas ! how careful should we be, while praising that fixedness of purpose which steps steadily onward to its object, that we ever hold up before each other the sad truth, that we are all erring mortals ; and that we may, in our right onward progress, crush beneath our steady step some beautiful flower, that might, for a long time, have shed forth its fragrance, if we had but turned a little in our path.

On his unquiet bed he lay ; and as the clock told each

passing hour, he grew more and more restless. The consequences of his stern decree began to unfold themselves before him; and when far into the night, and when all expectation of her return was at an end, he would have given what few worldly goods he possessed, only to have heard her gentle step seeking again her home. Once, he almost thought he heard the latch of the door move, and long he listened; but he heard it not again, and when the morning light broke in upon him, he arose to look forth upon the little world with which he was surrounded, and see that all was desolate.

It was but two days after these occurrences, which had thus filled all the parties with bitter sorrow, when a young and well-dressed lady called at the house of Mr. Upjohn. There was a dignity and ease of manner which, more than her expressively beautiful countenance, attracted the notice and respect of the old man, who was a great admirer of the proprieties of life. She introduced herself as "Sarah Pearsall."

"I have called," she said, "by particular request, and on an errand not strictly my own, since it concerns Mr. and Mrs. Upjohn more particularly than it does myself."

They both looked at her with a manifest desire to know the purport of her errand.

"I believe you are intimately acquainted with James Edwards; I have often heard him speak of your family."

"James has been a frequent visitor here, madam, and we have felt a deep interest for him; but from what we hear, he has done for himself for this world; and grieved, deeply grieved are we, not only for his own sake, but for those that are near and dear to him."





"But he protests his innocence, and those of us who know him intimately have no doubt of it."

Mr. Upjohn shook his head.

"I hope it may prove so—I hope it may prove so; but there is little faith to be put in the young, now-a-days, Miss, asking your pardon; little are they to be relied upon."

For a moment, Sarah spoke not; the few words Mr. Upjohn had said, or rather what he had not said, but only signified, filled her with alarm, such as she had not felt before.

It was, however, but the feeling of the moment; her mind flew back to the hour when James made that solemn assurance of his innocence, and there it rested.

"I came, as I said, sir, not on business of my own, and merely mentioned Mr. Edwards' name as my passport to a hearing with you. I came, in his name, to plead with you for your niece, who is in the house of Mr. Langworthy, lying on a bed of sickness, from which it is feared she will never rise. She is deeply penitent for the past, and wishes to see you that she may ask your forgiveness before she dies. She has asked me to intreat you, if that were necessary; but I am sure it cannot be, for Mr. Edwards has often told me how much you loved her."

"Oh, Miss, it is from those we love the dearest, that we suffer most."

Again there was silence, except as it was broken by the sobs of the old lady, who had begun to weep at the first mention of Gitty's name.

"I hope, sir, my coming may not be misunderstood by

you as officious on my part; I was, providentially, made acquainted with her but an hour ago, and as she had no one by whom she could send the message to you, I offered my services."

"And I assure you, Miss, it is far from me to be offended at what you have done. It is a sad trial that we are suffering under, but if the poor child wishes to see us, it is not in our hearts to say no."

The voice of the old man trembled, and he paused. "No, it is not in our hearts to say that, God knows."

He wiped the tear that was stealing down his furrowed cheek. "Come, wife, if Gitty wants to see us, the sooner we are there the better."

Sarah had spoken words of kindness to Gitty; she had talked to her about things that Gitty felt were of more consequence now than all earthly matters, and when she had parted from her, the poor sick girl intreated, if it was not too much to ask, that she would return once more.

The distance was not great, and soon passed over. It was but a few days since the youthful sufferer was in the bloom of life and beauty. She was beautiful still; but, alas! when the heart is sick, and Disease has laid his hand upon us, sad changes are speedily made.

Mrs. Upjohn preceded her husband to the bedside; she saw the pale and disconsolate countenance of her who had been so long their child, and throwing herself upon her bosom, poured forth the overflowings of her heart.

Gitty, however, had a heavy heart to unburden, and she could only do it to her who had ever been her confidant in the days of her childhood; and there, in the ear

of her weeping kinswoman, she poured out the whole story of her wrong.

Mrs. Upjohn dried her tears, and rising with a smile of joy upon her countenance—

“Husband, let us praise God. Our Gitty has been injured, but she is still as pure and spotless as when she was a child upon your knee. Oh, come to her, papa!”

The old man raised his hands.

“Thank God!” and he bowed his head over his dear Gitty, and looked silently into her eyes now glistening with unnatural brightness, and the tears fell fast and free.

“My dear uncle, forgive me—oh, forgive me!”

“I do, I do;” his head rested on her sunken cheek, and her arms clung to him as they had often done in her days of childhood.

CHAPTER XVII.

ADJOINING the house in which the sick and sorrow-stricken Gitty lay, was a small building, rather old and rickety in its appearance. It had, in its day, been a little more elevated in the world than it now was, for it had required an ascent of several steps to enter it; but the ground upon which it was built not being so high as the good fathers of the city thought it should be, to correspond with adjacent parts, they ordered the street, which passed the little building, to be filled in and raised sufficiently to suit their taste; the consequence was that, as the owner did not feel able to raise the foundation of his house, he was obliged to reverse the order of its steps, and, instead of walking up into his dwelling, its inmates were obliged to descend into that, and ascend into the street.

It was a narrow building, and almost the whole front, beside the door of entrance, was taken up by a bow window. It was one of those windows which, in the great city, go without much washing or dusting. In fact, I do not know but the dust and cobwebs which had gathered upon it were considered by the occupants as rather useful than otherwise, for sufficient light found its way into the little room which lay back of it for all necessary purposes, even on the darkest days, and when the sun shone brightly

his rays were somewhat shorn of their lustre in passing through the thick covering—no small comfort on a hot afternoon.

At the bottom of the window ran a shelf, covered with a curious variety of old locks, rusty keys, brass door-knobs, very much soiled by exposure, together with an assortment of tools, such as files, little hammers, spring-saws, long steel awls, &c., &c.

Through all hours of the day could be seen, by the passer-by, a little man, seated before a table which joined the window-seat at a right angle, and ran back into the room. His position was near enough to the window to enable him with ease to reach any instrument or article which might lay upon it, and yet, with freedom, to turn a small lathe connected with his table, upon which he was almost always employed, holding some small piece of iron or steel, and working it into such shape as he no doubt had a clear idea of, but which a looker-on would have been sorely puzzled to make out. There was no sign up to designate the business which was carried on within; but it could not well be mistaken for anything else than it really was—a place where old keys were mended or altered, and locks, not too badly injured, repaired.

A lighted door opened from this shop into a long, narrow room, that was kept, if not very neatly, at least sufficiently so to be quite in contrast with things in front. It was the parlour, bedroom, and kitchen, which served the old man and his wife for each of these purposes respectively.

The occupation was one laudable enough, and brought in quite a little revenue. There are more old keys to be

mended in a large city, than one such establishment can attend to, and as the shop in question drew its customers from a large area, there was always work on hand.

It is, probably, not quite according to the strict rules of justice, that the maker of an article should be responsible for the use it may be put to ; yet there are some articles of such peculiar character, that the vendor or manufacturer can scarcely be called innocent, unless a watchful eye is kept upon his customers.

Among the variety that came to purchase old keys, or to get others changed to answer some particular lock, the old man could sometimes give a good guess as to the character of the applicant, and the use to be made of the article ; and many a watchword has he, in his day, given to one who was much distinguished for his adroitness in following the clue to a roguery.

It was drawing towards the close of a lowery day, when a man of robust appearance entered the street not far from the described premises, and walked towards them with a loitering gait, his eye wandering carelessly from person to person, and from thing to thing, now glancing at the loaded cart and its driver, and then at the dwelling by which he happened to be passing. He had rather a stubborn-looking cane, which he carried in a careless manner, holding it near its centre, and dropping it upon the pavement in time with his own step. As he came opposite the little lock and key shop, he paused, and fixed his eye for a moment upon its busy occupant, who could be but dimly seen through the dusky light within. Then stepping down, he opened the door without ceremony, and stood watching the operation without saying a word, or

receiving any notice or salutation. Presently the wheel stopped buzzing, the old man looked very intently at the work he had been performing, and then laying it carefully by itself, threw his spectacles on his forehead, and turned one eye full upon his visitor, while the other seemed to be resting on some object in another part of the room.

"Well, uncle, you keep the little wheel buzzing, I see. What contrivance is that you've put away so carefully?"

"It's nothing that concerns you, or any of your craft. It is something I am fixing for a real honest man."

"Then you acknowledge you do jobs sometimes for folks that may be a little slippery?"

"Why, I did one for you the other day."

"Ha! ha! ha!—well done, uncle Bill."

"But come round, man, and take a seat; I want to chat a little with you about a small matter, and as you are always hunting for game, may be I can put you on a scent."

The visitor turned his eyes round the little room, and taking an old, short-legged stool, placed it at one end of the long table, and resting his chin upon his fists, which he had piled one above the other upon it, looked straight across at the owner of the shop, who had fixed himself very much in the same position.

The two looked at each other in silence for some time, and formed rather a grotesque appearance, for neither had anything to boast in the way of beauty, and their features and forms were in perfect contrast. The visitor was stoutly built, his countenance heavy, and his projecting eyes, as he rolled them up in the position in which he was sitting, presented rather a severe aspect.

The other had little besides his covering of skin, and that very much dried up and wrinkled; he was small in stature, and small in latitude; there was very little of anything to him. His features were screwed together, probably having become so, from the habit of looking hard at small objects, and his eyes were not at all in harmony with each other, for they never looked at the same object at one time. There was, however, a shrewdness to the cast of his countenance, and a penetration to his eye, that might have suited a lawyer, whose professional business was chiefly with hard accounts and tangled statements.

"Well, old Jack, what will you give me now for a clue to a villain?"

"Me!—give!—nothing—I can put my hand on more villains than I can on honest men, any time."

"No doubt of that, for your hands have no business on honest folks; but say, what will you give?"

"Pshaw! what is it to me? But tell, if you've got any thing worth knowing."

The old man changed his position, turned from the table, and crossing his legs—

"You know James Upjohn?"

"Yes, what of him?"

"Nothing of him; but his niece is next door here, with old Simon Langworthy's folks; there's been some trouble between her and the old man. You see I learnt it through their daughter Lyddy; she runs into our house every now and then to have a chat with the old woman. These gals, I tell you what, don't they beat the mischief?"

"I don't know much about the girls; I never had



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much to do with them ; but go on, and let's hear what you're driving at."

"Well, you see, this young one of Upjohn's took a notion to a dandy-like young Jack that old Jemmy didn't fancy ; the old man, you know, sees straight ahead ; he's no fool, you know that."

"Yes, yes, I know him ; but get on with your story."

"Well, Upjohn ups and tells his niece that she must chop him right off—and the old man, you know, won't be balked, if he can help it—and she knew when he said the thing, that was enough. Well, she wouldn't give him up, so she clears out—and what do you think ?"

"How should I know ? for you are telling such a cock-and-bull story, the Old One himself couldn't see the end of it."

"That incarnate—what shall I call him ?—that false-hearted fiddlestick of a fellow, just when she got into trouble, and all for his sake, turns his back upon her, and leaves her ; don't you call him a villain ?"

"Yes, villain enough for all that matter ; but if I should be obliged to look after such kind of rogues, I should have work enough ; the law won't touch him, you old fool, if he should break a dozen girls' hearts ; is that all you've got to say ?"

"Not exactly ; you won't wait, and hear me out. You see, a man that will do such a thing as that, ain't too good to do worse—that's my mind. Well, one day, not long since, a youngster came in here to get a job done for him ; I know a few things, and I can tell when there's deviltry in it ; thinks I, young chap, I shall keep my eye

on you, for all the cut of your rig is so smooth. Well, he wanted me to fix him a key, like a pattern he had, and a curious thing it was, I tell you. I've seen all kinds of keys, but I never saw such a twistical concern as that; and what kind of a pattern do you think I was to make it from?"

"Why, another key."

"No, it warn't—no such thing; nothing but a piece of dough; and how the critter contrived to git such a clean cast of it was a mystery to me; he's a 'cute one, *that*, depend on it. Well, I took the directions and all about it, and off he goes, and now just see how queer it happened. You see that curtain there up to the door: the old woman keeps it down a little, just so she can see through. Well, who should be in the room all the while the young fellow was here, but Lyddy, and you know these gals are full of curiosity; so Lyddy takes a sly peep into the old shop. 'Who do you think,' says she to my old woman—'who do you think it is?' I know," said she."

"Who was it? What's the name?"

"Well, I can't remember names without I put 'em down. But you see she wouldn't tell the name; whether she was afeared there was something wrong going on, or afeared that I should tell him that she had been peeping at him, or whether it was for clear mischief, I can't say, but we couldn't make her tell; only, she wanted to know when he was coming again, and I telled her."

"Did she see him again?"

"She did; but we couldn't get the name out of her, do our best."

"Why didn't you get him to leave his name, when he gave the order?"

"There, now! is that *you*? and don't you know better than that—don't you, now?"

"Why, I suppose if there was any deviltry in it, he wouldn't be very likely to give you the right one."

"There you have it. He did give his name; but when a man stammers at his own name, then look out, says I; but I got the right one for all that; I've got his name, there in my locker, and no mistake."

"How do you know?"

"Why, you see, it was by pure luck, or maybe the Old One helped along a little; you know, sometimes, he helps rogues the wrong way; just hear now. I finished the key, and he was satisfied that it *was* the thing. 'What's to pay,' says he? 'So much,' says I, and with that, he outs with a handful of change, papers, keys, and every thing from his pocket, at once; it *was* getting dark like; he laid it all down among my rubbish on the counter, and after he paid me and picked up his trash, I saw he had left a penknife, a little bit of a concern. Thinks I, 'Bill, keep dark;' he never saw it, and just then old Sandy Ferguson stepped in, and the youngster went off like a shot."

"A name on the knife?"

"Isn't there, my boy—all out in full as pretty as a picture."

"Let me see it, Bill?"

"What will you give me?"

"Oh, none of your fun, uncle Bill; I am serious now; this is a matter of more consequence than you think for."

The old man immediately turned round, and unlocking a small desk, handed a neat and costly penknife to Mr. Catchem, for the reader may as well know the name, if he has not already guessed it.

A grim smile played upon his features as he read the name, engraved on a silver plate.

"A good-looking fellow, wasn't he?"

"Yes."

"Dark hair?"

"Yes."

"Dark eyes?"

"Yes."

"Pale-looking?"

"Yes."

"Rather genteel in his rig?"

"Just so."

"It is just as I thought; he is the rogue, and they will find it out as I told them."

"Then you know about him?"

"I know enough about him; as much as I want to. He is the very one that had some of old Geordie Hunt's money in his trunk, and swore to me that he knew nothing about it, and all that; and he's made some of them believe, that he is innocent as a lamb. But part of your story, Bill, don't hang together; first you went on to tell me a long rigmarole about a young fellow that jilted that girl of Upjohn's; what has that girl to do with this?"

"You are always in such a hurry, Jack, that a man hasn't time to put the ends of his story together. You see, when Lyddy first got sight on him, she came up

slyly to my old woman—says she, ‘That’s Gitty’s beau; what can he be wanting?’ But the old woman didn’t know about their beaux, you know these gals have so many of them; and she asked the name, but then she wouldn’t tell. But last night we found out all about it, and he’s the very one that she saw in here, that was the cause of all the trouble that poor girl is in, and like as not she won’t live; they say she won’t.”

“Well, well, here’s this pretty little tell-tale; you keep it snug, till it’s called for. You can swear to the chap if you see him again, can’t you?”

“Never fear of me; I could pick him out among a thousand; I’ve marked him.”

“That’s you. Well, I must be jogging; so, bad luck to you, old fellow.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

TIME rolls on his steady round, and the fears and hopes which agitate the breast of man, which have pressed his vision forward into the dark future, must at length have their truth or falsehood tested. And how many of us are there who live alone on the interests of the present moment—who have no to-morrow hastening towards us, whose revelations shall crown us with the wreath of happiness, or sink our heaving bosoms into the gloom of despair!

"To-morrow," said James Edwards, as he paced the little room in a lodging-house where he had spent the most of his time since his return from the country, and in which, hour by hour, he had sat and ruminated over the tangled maze in which his fate was enveloped, "to-morrow! it will be over—the worst will be known." And the thoughts that rushed upon him as he said this, the dark images that arose like magic spectres, and spread out their horrors to his view, threw back the life-blood to its covert, and, helpless almost as an infant, he cast his trembling frame upon the couch that was near at hand, and wrung his hands in agony.

Alas! for poor fallen man. The relics of that better state which once was thine, which spread such enchant-

ing loveliness even around the tattered wreck ; the loves which pour their perfume on the heart, and almost make it feel that airs of heaven are breathing their freshness round it—how even these, rich treasures left thee, are off “the envenomed tooth,” the wormwood, and the gall of life. And now around that pale and trembling youth start up all the enchantments that love and friendship can awaken. Their beautiful images flit before his agonising mind, and every friend whose being was the solace of his heart, and every joy that had blessed his past life, and every hope that sparkled in the distant future, were all near, but as cruel thorns within that secret place where love and hope abide.

He is aroused from the power of his troubled thoughts by a tap at the door. A well-timed friend, Mr. Augustus Hunt, has come on business of deep moment, and the anxious look he brings with him denotes that he, too, has his own cares and distresses in view of the “to-morrow” which was so near at hand.

James arose as he entered, and the greeting between them was cordial, although the hand was grasped in silence, and not even a smile was visible on either countenance.

Mr. Hunt took the seat which was offered him, laid his large brimmed hat upon the table, and wiped away the drops which had gathered on his brow.

“I have just come from having a long talk with our counsel ; have you seen them to-day ?”

“I have, sir.”

“Things don’t look much brighter as they view them.”

“So it seems, sir.”

"I have, as I said, had a long conversation with them both. Your young friend, like all young men, has a hope that something may turn up, but it is a very serious matter to have the judgment of twelve men passed upon us, under oath to decide according to the evidence brought before them; and, as it now stands, with all the evidence on one side—all against us."

"It is so, sir; but what more can be done?"

"I said your young friend was still hoping that something would turn up; but the other feels differently; he is a man, you know, of large experience in such matters, and he looks things right in the face. I don't know, James, but he has said to you just what he has to me; but to him it looks dark."

"Yes, sir, he has told me so."

"And you asked me just now what more can be done. I see but one thing that can be done, and I have come here this evening to propose it to you."

James fixed his eye intently upon him for a moment.

"I should be glad to hear it, sir; and I assure you, Mr. Hunt, if it is anything that I can do—"

"Well, well, but before I propose it to you, Sally must know of it; I must see you together. I won't do anything underhanded about it. She is now at the house of a friend, where I promised to bring you, and where we can have a free talk together by ourselves; and now I want you to go with me."

James answered not, for the rush of thoughts, at the prospect of meeting Sarah, had utterly confused his mind.

"You seem to hesitate, Master James; one would think you would rejoice at an interview."

"Mr. Hunt, you will excuse my appearing insensible to your proposition, for I am sure it is meant in kindness; but you know, sir, that I have not seen your niece since the hour when, like an angel from Heaven, she came to my cell in prison, and ventured her all of life upon my assertion of innocence. I have felt that, until I can stand again an equal with my fellows, and every taint of this suspicion which now rests upon me is washed away, it would be unjust to her that I should do aught to connect her name with mine, or continue an intimacy that may possibly, and I do not know but I must now say, will in all probability attach disgrace with it."

"I know it all, James; I respect your motives; you have acted in this matter as a man should, but it is idle to let small matters come up now. I wish to propose a step to you that will concern her, as well as yourself, and it must be done in the presence of you both."

"I have nothing to say, but will do as you wish. I will accompany you, sir."

The feelings which rioted in the breast of James Edwards, as he entered the room, it would not be very easy to describe. The first glimpse of her lovely countenance, as she turned her mild bright eye upon him, unfolding the strength of that affection which no circumstances of dismay could weaken, had well nigh unmanned him; he could have fallen at her feet, almost a worshipper. But his strength of purpose at once roused every faculty of his soul to its aid. He received her offered hand, and even felt her warm grasp pressing his with the cordiality of a sister's greeting, but he returned it not; his cold

and unmeaning salutation might have answered for one whose heart had no feeling for the hand to express.

A chill struck the heart of Sarah, and it was with difficulty she reached the seat, which with such bounding feelings she had left to greet him on his entrance. Her womanly pride, however, soon came to her relief, and her whole frame was quickened by its powerful stimulus. There was no time, however, for the indulgence of emotions, comparatively trivial.

"And now, my darling," said Mr. Hunt, as he took his seat, "we must proceed to business, for there will be no time to lose. I have brought you together, that what I say may be said before you both, and then there can be no misunderstanding. To-morrow is coming on fast, and when it comes, there will be no time for any new arrangements; and now to the point. I have had a free and full talk with the counsel, and as I have told you before, my darling, and as I have told James this evening, they give no encouragement. Now, when an evil is coming upon us, there is no use in shutting our eyes, or turning away our head; it won't keep off the danger, nor fit us to meet it. In this case, the consequences of a defeat are too terrible to think of; I need not tell you what condition James would be in, nor is it worth while to say what condition his family would be in; and there is no prospect now but that a verdict must be given against him. When we cannot face an evil, we must fly from it."

Mr. Hunt paused and cast his eye towards James, who was looking at him, every feature strained with the intensity of his interest.

"How can I shun the ordeal which is before me, sir? Surely you would not ask me to do it by flight?"

"There is no other way."

"And what would be the consequences?"

"The consequences I expect to meet. As your surety, I shall be held responsible for the amount of bail; that I will readily pay, and moreover, besides that, I have now by me a sum sufficient to carry you far away from here, and to enable you to establish yourself in a new place. There will be but little pains taken to search for you, and in a short time the whole matter will be forgotten."

James fixed his eye firmly upon Sarah, if possible to pry into the feelings which were working in her breast. Mr. Hunt noticed his searching glance, and as though he could look into the thoughts of the young man continued, "This proposal comes entirely from myself, and it is the first idea of the kind that has escaped my lips to either of you."

James at length arose; his countenance was flushed, for he was highly excited.

"Mr. Hunt, I appreciate your feelings; your offer, I know, is dictated by kindness; but allow me to ask you whether my flight would not be construed into an acknowledgment of guilt?"

"It doubtless would; but what would the opinion of the public be, if you become the tenant of a prison?"

"I thank you, sir, most heartily thank you, for the liberality of your present offer, and for the noble and generous conduct you have manifested towards me in my sad and friendless condition; you shall be remembered by me with gratitude while my mind retains its conscous-

ness. I know well, sir, how terrible will be my condition should I fall beneath the solemn verdict of a jury, which, from all that now appears, there is every prospect I must suffer. I have a loving mother, whose heart is bleeding in anguish at my hopeless state, and I have two angel sisters, who would go to prison and to death for me; I love them with the full power of my mind; and above all these, I hold, as my heart's richest treasure, that lovely being now sitting by your side. To these, I fear not to say I am ready at any time to sacrifice my life. But, sir, dear as these priceless treasures are to me, I hold them all as nought, when compared with that integrity of heart which I will cleave unto, even to the depths of degradation. To-morrow I am to be arraigned as a culprit; my friends may leave me, my counsel may desert my cause as hopeless, and the world may point at me as a recreant to virtue; but at that tribunal I shall appear, if God spares my life, alone, unfriended, if so it must be; and if nothing else, I can at least appeal to Him who knows my heart that I am not guilty of the act alleged against me. If it be His will that I suffer, His will be done; but never, never, never will I do an act that shall be an acknowledgment of guilt."

Sarah threw herself into her uncle's arms.

"Dear uncle, he is right; James is right; let the will of God be done."

Mr. Hunt was deeply affected; he grasped the hand of the young man.

"I'll—I'll stand by you, come what will."

James parted from Sarah as he had met her; he felt the deep stigma that rested upon him; his heart yearned

in its fulness towards her, but he felt that, until his innocence should be made manifest, he could never clasp her as his own.

Mrs. Edwards and her daughters would gladly have followed James to the city, that they might, in the event of his conviction, have been present to sustain his spirit, and, as far as they could, share his trouble; but at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Wharton, they had concluded to remain at home until the result should be known, on condition that he should take their place.

Mr. Wharton did not reach the city until the morning of the trial. A dark, chilly morning, too, it was; and, in that respect, accorded with the feelings of those whose fate hung upon the uncertainties of the day. Few words passed between James and his old friend as they met in his little room. There are moments of bitterness in life, when, like the companions of Job, the lookers-on in the sad drama feel that all the consolation their words can afford, is to the sufferer's heart but the sighing of the idle wind.

Mr. Wharton had been removed from the circle of all those rumours, which from some source, not generally known, were originated and spread about, all tending to weaken the confidence of his friends, and perhaps, upon all of them, exerting more or less influence. One alone remained unshaken; her heart had never wavered. She had taken his word as perfect truth, and amid all the dark surmisings which had been scattered thickly around her, she retained her confidence, unshaded by a single doubt. To Mr. Wharton, also, for reasons above stated, he appeared but as the victim of some vile plot; he saw no

dark spot upon his character; he viewed him with no suspicious eye, as many did; his mind had never been affected by the tongue of rumour.

A court of justice is a serious place to all who enter it with interests of importance depending upon its decision; whether these interests are of a pecuniary nature, or involve, what is of infinitely greater moment, the loss or gain of character. To the judge and to the jurors whose decision is to affect a fellow-being, perhaps for the remainder of his days on earth, it is doubtless a cause of much anxiety; for no man, whose heart has not become callous to the sympathies of our nature, can sit as an arbiter upon his brother's fate, without some fear lest, after all, his decision may not be according to truth, and his fiat consign an innocent sufferer to eternal ignominy. But beyond these, it may not be ill-natured nor unjust to say, there is but little feeling. The lawyer, indeed, acts well his part; his serious look, his earnest words, his animating questions, and, sometimes, even his falling tear, answer their end, and almost cause the lookers-on to believe that where there is such a blaze, there must be heat; where there is such an expression of truthfulness, the reality must be somewhere at hand. But, alas! the look, the words, the gestures, and the tear, are often, far too often, but the actor's tinsel dress, thrown aside with disgust when his hireling work is done. Beyond the bar, too, where the multitude assemble day by day and feed their polluted appetite, how the heart sickens to behold the motley throng gathering on the long benches, and stretching their eager necks forward to catch the dainty treat. The unmeaning stare, the prying look of curiosity,

and the heartless smile, all meet the eye, and almost shame us as we own them for our fellows.

At the hour appointed for the opening of the court, James entered, accompanied by Mr. Wharton, and took his seat. Every eye was at once fixed upon him, and few who watched his composed look, his gentlemanly demeanour, and his open, manly countenance, could spy those secret, sinister marks which are so often said to lurk about those lineaments which characterise the man and distinguish the rogue, even through all his disguises. A few moments after the prisoner entered, the Judge took his seat, and the preliminaries of opening the court, empannelling the jurors, &c., took place; when the District Attorney at once arose and stated to the court and jury in a plain, simple, straightforward manner, the grounds upon which the indictment had been made out, which brought this young man before them as a prisoner.

He told over the circumstances of the loss which Mr. Hunt had met with, and the reasons for believing the prisoner guilty.

“And I expect to prove to you, gentlemen of the jury, the different circumstances just related, in so clear a manner, that I think you will be forced to the conviction that the prisoner is guilty.”

He then sat down and commenced calling the witnesses. Mr. Gerardus Hunt was first sworn and examined. He testified to the fact of his having deposited the money in the chest; of his knowing it to be there for some time subsequent; that on the morning of — November last, on searching for the same, it was not to be found; also as to the circumstance of a strange key being found in the

door of the room where the chest was kept. "And I wish you, gentlemen of the jury, to bear this circumstance in mind, for I shall prove to you by another witness, that this key belonged to a closet in the room where the prisoner slept."

He then examined him as to the key of the iron chest, where he kept it, the peculiar construction of the key, &c.; and then showing it to the jury: "There, gentlemen, is a curiosity, and, I will venture to say, not one of you has ever seen its mate or anything like it." The jury examined it with care, put one or two questions to the witness, and seemingly satisfied themselves that it was rather unique, and not likely to have a counterpart in the city. The witness was then turned over to the opposing counsel.

"Mr. Hunt, may I ask you—I believe the question has been put to you already, but I will trouble you to answer it again—where do you keep the key of this chest which you think has been robbed?"

"Where do I keep it, sir? Why, I keep it in a closet in my bedroom."

"Very well, sir, and do you allow anyone but yourself to go to that closet?"

"No, sir; no one but my wife."

"Do you keep the key of that closet, Mr. Hunt?"

"I do, sir, in the general way."

"In the general way! what do you mean by that? do you mean that you generally keep it?"

"Yes, sir, generally."

"You acknowledge, then, Mr. Hunt, that you do not always have possession of this key; may I ask, who besides you has it at times?"

"My wife, sir ; no one but my wife."

"Then I understand you to say, Mr. Hunt, that no person, except yourself and your wife, is allowed, for any cause, to go to that closet."

"That's the case, sir."

"Please speak so that the gentlemen of the jury can hear you, Mr. Hunt."

"Yes, it's so, sir ;" in a loud tone.

"That you and Mrs. Hunt alone go to that closet?"

"Yes."

"And do you really suppose, Mr. Hunt—now I wish you to remember, sir, that you are under oath—are you willing here solemnly to swear, that this money was forcibly or in a secret manner taken from your chest?"

The witness was somewhat confused.

"Why, sir, I can swear that I put the money into the chest, and that when I went to look for it, it was gone ; but how it went it is not in my power to say."

"That will do, sir."

"Mr. Hunt," said the senior counsel of Edwards, "have you had any reason to suspect the prisoner as a person who could be guilty of such an act, previous to the time when the money was found in his trunk?"

"No, sir, not the least in the world."

"That is all, sir."

"The witness may take his seat," said the Judge ; "call your next witness."

Mrs. Hunt next took the stand, and was particularly examined as to the habits of herself and husband in regard to the keeping of the keys, and many things were elicited before the jury, which satisfied them, that although

they kept the key of the closet with much safety, still there were other keys in the house which would open it, and that a member of the family, if so disposed, might have access to the closet.

The countenance of Theodore lighted up as this witness retired, as though he could see an opening by which an object might be accomplished favourable to his client.

The niece of Mr. Hunt, Miss Sarah Pearsall, was next called, and as she advanced to the stand, every eye was drawn towards her with deep interest. Some were attracted by a knowledge of the fact that she was so deeply concerned in the fate of Edwards; and others, by the grace of her movement and the beauty of her countenance. There are few faces that are not much improved when the mind is absorbed by some controlling feeling; but to a countenance like that of Sarah, it was the one thing wanted to give surpassing richness to her beauty. Never, in her brightest hour, when sunshine played around her, and the light smile of happiness continually rested on her features, did she appear so lovely as when, laying her hat upon the seat, she walked to the witness's stand. She was dressed with much neatness, but without the least attempt at show, and was evidently too much concerned in what might be the end of the investigation, to heed the public gaze then resting upon her.

The questions put to her by the District Attorney, did not seem to be of much consequence; he evidently did not feel called upon to allow his duty as a lawyer, to control the feelings of the gentleman; but, perhaps, he knew that evidence of a more direct kind was yet forth-

coming, and he could afford to give as little trouble as possible to one whose whole demeanour was shaded by a cast of sorrow. As so few questions were asked by the prosecuting counsel, it was not supposed that any cross-examination would be made, but as she turned to leave the stand, the junior counsel of defendant rose.

"May I ask you, Miss, a few questions? I will endeavour not to detain you long."

"Certainly, sir." And as she cast her eye in the direction of her questioner, it met that of her cousin Rudolph, who had just entered and taken a seat among the witnesses. He was very pale, and evidently did not feel at ease; perhaps the unexpected order he had received to be present was not agreeable; it had not been his design to witness the trial; and he had also understood, that he had been subpoenaed by the counsel for Edwards. Whether Sarah noticed anything peculiar in the countenance of her cousin, that caused her to rest her eye upon him, I cannot say; but she did fix it, with an earnestness before which his eye immediately fell, and as he saw that others were attracted by her gaze, his confusion was very manifest.

"May I ask you, Miss Pearsall, in reference to visitors at the house of your uncle? You have lived many years in his family, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, from my childhood."

"You have frequent visitors, doubtless, at your uncle's? Are there not some who are very much at home in the family?"

"There are, certainly," and her eye again rested on Rudolph.

"Some of these have access to all parts of the house; are, in fact, almost members of the family?"

"If your honour pleases," said the District Attorney, rising in haste, and looking at the Judge, "I object to that question."

"Mr. Berry," said the Judge, "what do you wish to establish by these questions?"

"May it please your honour," said Theodore, rising with much animation, and speaking with a confidence that he had not hitherto assumed, "there is a deep mystery about this unhappy transaction, and I wish to expose to your honour and to these gentlemen, some of the secrets of this family. I believe your honour will instruct these gentlemen, that if a reasonable doubt exist in their minds as to the guilt of my client, that doubt should be resolved in his favour. I wish to prove to your honour and to these gentlemen, that there were those who, by intimacy with this family, might avail themselves of access to all its privacies with even more assurance than my client, and if I can also show a motive, a detestable motive, to be sure, and one which, if proved, must consign its subject to eternal infamy; if I can prove—"

"Have you any proof direct, Mr. Berry, that will go to establish the fact as to who it was that perpetrated the act charged against the prisoner?"

"Not direct, your honour, but—"

"It will not answer, sir, however assured your own mind may be on the subject. All the evidence hitherto is against the prisoner; if you have any counter-evidence to prove that he did not or could not have done it, you

may bring that forward; but it would not be allowable to raise a mere suspicion against an individual not on trial, and of course not able to defend himself."

"May it please your honour, and with all due deference to the decision of the court, still, the evidence against us is as yet but circumstantial. I acknowledge, indeed, that as such, it bears strongly against my client, and unless its force can be broken, will go far with an impartial jury to compel a verdict against him; but the court will doubtless remember the great suit reported from the English court—'The Crown *versus* Jones,'—wherein the defendant was arraigned for a similar offence, and the money was found upon his person. Yet even in such a case, the court allowed testimony to prove a motive to destroy the character, and bring terrible evil upon the defendant, and which, finally, resulted in his acquittal."

"The case to which the counsel refers is well remembered, but the proofs adduced to substantiate the charge were direct and sufficiently strong to prove beyond a doubt a conspiracy against the defendant. If I understand the counsel, all that you expect to prove by testimony, is an evil motive which might, by possibility, have induced an attempt upon the character of the prisoner."

Theodore took his seat.

"Your next witness, gentlemen."

The District Attorney beckoned to Betty to take her place; she immediately arose, laid aside her hat and came forward with an elastic step, the broad frill of her decent-looking cap flying back as she walked, and her face reddened like a true daughter of Erin.

"What is your name, my good woman?"

"Betty, sir, is my name."

"What else? that's not all your name, is it?"

"It's all that's nadeful; I'll answer to it any day."

"But we want the whole of your name; you were not christened Betty, were you?"

"That's more nor I can say, sir; you must ax them as knows."

"My good woman," said the Judge, "we want your name just as you sign it."

"Please your honour, and that's what I never did in my life; I jist makes a bit of a cross, and that's the end of it. But, sir, my name is Manahan, Elizabeth Manahan, or Betsey Manahan, or Betty; but Betty's good enough, and it's the most convanient to me."

"Well, Betty, how long have you lived in the family of Mr. Hunt?"

"Eight years coming next Christmas, and it's truth."

"Then you have been there all the time that Mr. Edwards was in the family?"

"It's true, sir, I have."

"Did you see much of him?"

"Did I see him? I seed him every day; how could I be living there, and not see him?"

"Well, did he go much about the house? Was he not occasionally in different parts of the house?"

"I can't say but he was."

"You mean by that, that he did go into the different rooms, sometimes into the parlour, sometimes into the kitchen, and sometimes into the bedrooms, or closets, just as any member of the family might do?"

"Upon the life of me, if I can just say that I ever seed him as your honour says, in the bedrooms and the closets ; no, no, I'll tell you the truth. He would sometimes jist as he was passing the kitchen-door, put his head in and say ' Good mornin', Betty,' or ' Good evening, Betty,' for I'll say it afore his face and behind his back, that a real gintleman he was, and not afeared to spake to a puir body, be they black or white."

"Well, Betty, you remember the circumstance of Mr. Edwards' key, or the key of his room being found in the door of the vault?"

"I do, sir."

"You are sure that it was the key of his closet?"

"Ah, sir!" heaving a sigh; "it was even so."

"And how do you account for its being there?"

"That I don't know, sir; it's past my comprehension."

"But you saw the key there, and knew the key to belong to the closet in Mr. Edwards' room?"

"Yes, sir, I know the key well."

"Is this the key, Betty?" handing her a small key; Betty examined it, and handing it back—

"It's the very same, sir, and there is the very mark he made on it wid his own hand;" and then, as requested, she told the whole story, which she had related at the apprehension of Edwards. The account she gave of the affair seemed to affect the Judge and the jury rather unfavourably towards Edwards, and his counsel felt that, if possible, some effort must be made to counteract it, for Betty, by her strong sympathy for James, manifested in her sighs and ejaculations, left a decided impression of her fears that all was not right, and as soon as the

District Attorney signified that he was through with the witness, "Betty," said Theodore, "you would not wish the court to understand that you supposed Mr. Edwards had any hand in opening the vault-door with the key?"

"Oh, bless your soul!" lifting up both her hands at the same time, "it's the furthestest from my thoughts; that it is—no, no, I'd cut my tongue off first."

"Well, Betty, I did not believe you thought so, only I wished to let these gentlemen know that you did not think so."

"If it's my mind that they're wanting, I'll give it and fear nobody."

"We don't wish your opinion, my good woman," said the Judge. "Mr. Berry, if you have no more questions to put to the witness, she may take her seat."

"You may take your seat, Betty"—and Betty marched back in the same quick time with which she had come to the stand. As the officer who had apprehended Edwards was not able to be present, his affidavit was read, stating in a clear, concise manner, the whole scene which transpired at the time of his being arrested, and it was truly unfortunate for James that he had manifested any reluctance to having his trunk examined. It told, evidently, a very bad story to the minds of the jurors.

The testimony for the prosecution now closed, and Mr. Berry arose immediately to open his case.

He stated in very simple and plain terms the peculiar difficulties attending the cause which he had undertaken to defend; he acknowledged, frankly, that the testimony which had been brought forward, and which he had no doubt was true testimony, so far as it went, was very

nuch against his client ; but the jury would bear in mind that, after all, it was circumstantial. " And I am free to acknowledge, that there are cases where this species of evidence, when its combinations are complete, forms the strongest of all proofs, and proclaims with its mute tongue the guilt of him upon whom it bears, as truly and as eloquently as the heavens above us and the creation round us proclaim the hand that made them. But it is, also, a species of evidence that may be brought to bear upon the innocent, as well as the guilty. If there be within the social circle of any man a being vile enough to plot his ruin, it wants but a little artifice to weave a net from whose toils the purest reputation may not free him. Within the meshes of such a snare, do I most firmly believe the prisoner has been caught, and he stands now before you, gentlemen of the jury, almost a helpless victim. He has no power to solve the mystery, or explain away the circumstances that testify against him. All he can do is to prove to you, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the purity of his life, and that, until the fatal hour when this catastrophe was developed, not a stain rested upon his noble, generous, faithful character ; and when we have exhibited before you, gentlemen, undoubted proofs of what we assert, surely you will hesitate before you consign to infamy, upon the grounds of such evidence, one whose path has hitherto been so spotless."

The first witness called on the part of the defence was the Rev. Mr. Wharton, and as he arose, and walked to the stand, and bowed respectfully to the whole court, there was an involuntary return of the obeisance from the judge, the jury, and the bar. He was dressed with more

than usual care, and this, added to his manly form, his calm and dignified expression of countenance and courtly manners, was well calculated to excite feelings of reverence and respect. Without much questioning, the reverend gentleman was requested by the Judge to say what he knew of the young man, now the prisoner at the bar; and he did so in a clear and impressive manner; each word was articulated with a distinctness that could not fail to reach every listener in the vast room; a decided impression was made upon the feelings of the jurors, and one could almost read in their strained countenances the desire for some testimony that would enable them, with a clear conscience, to place the young man again where he had once stood, and restore him to the hearts that were bleeding for him. But alas! Justice, in her impartial decisions, cannot compromise the right to the yearnings of human sympathy.

The District Attorney, doubtless, noticed the effect produced by this witness, and felt it to be his duty to allay the excitement.

"If the other gentlemen are through with the witness, I would merely inquire, sir, whether what you state of the character and conduct of the prisoner has come from your own personal knowledge, or by hearsay?"

"Undoubtedly, sir, much of the information I have given has been derived from others, but from such sources, as leave not a shadow of doubt on my own mind of its perfect truth."

"Certainly, sir; we are fully assured, Mr. Wharton, that you have testified to what you believed to be facts; but is there no possibility that you may have been deceived?"

can conceive of none, sir."

"Well, sir, allowing the representations which you just made to be as you think they are, still, you know nothing of the habits of the young man while in custody?"

"I do not, sir; I could only take them for granted." "Exactly so."

"We are prepared on that point, Mr. Attorney," said the judge, rising—"we can prove his character here, sir, exactly."

"Mr. Wharton may take his seat;" and he retired with the same dignity and grace, bowing to the court, receiving the salutation of the Judge, who, in grace of countenance, dress, and personal bearing, was evidently a member of the same school.

Other witnesses were then called in turn to the witness-box; they were the two Messrs. Hunt, Mrs. Hunt, and Mr. Berry, his junior counsel. The testimony was almost exclusively, to his habits and deportment, and was decidedly favourable. Rudolph Hunt had been suggested by the counsel for Edwards, with the hope that such latitude might possibly be given by the court, in the examination of witnesses, as might have made his story, on some points, of consequence.

As the result then stood, there seemed no opening by his testimony could be made to bear favourably on the cause of Edwards. All eyes were now directed to the counsel for the prisoner, who were in close consultation.

There was evidently strong sympathy excited for the young man, but mingled with sad forebodings of his future, till, however, a hope remained that his counsel had

TO BE LOVED.

... expedient that might turn to his account.
... soon at an end; in a few moments Mr.
... and bowing to the Judge—
... "because the court, we rest our cause."
... was a sudden hush throughout the assembly, and
... was fixed upon the young man, who now stood
... make his last effort for one whom he had under-
... serve, not only as a counsellor, but as a friend;
... emotions which his countenance betrayed, the
... measured tones with which his exordium was
... plainly told that he felt the responsibility of his
... and the value of the interest for which he was
... to plead. He recapitulated in brief the account
... had been given of the affair, just as the testimony
... declared it to be. He denied nothing. He then
... went on with the history of young Edwards, touched with
... feeling, burning interest on some of the leading
... points of his life, told them of his filial piety, of his
... untiring diligence in the discharge of duties, and his spot-
... less reputation.

He then adverted to the circumstance which had brought him before them as a criminal.

"To you, gentlemen, it is unaccountable; an inconceivable mystery hangs over and around it; and I doubt not that each one of you, upon whose judgment depends the future weal or woe of my unfortunate client, would, from your hearts, rejoice if the veil could be removed, and the dark deed so exposed that its perpetrator should stand before you in all his odiousness.

"Doubts, I know, rest upon your minds, and your judgment lingers to reach the painful conclusion, to which,

in all honesty and truthfulness I must say, the testimony would lead you.

“I wish I could lift up this veil, and show you what my own eyes so clearly see. I wish I might be allowed to say to you all what I believe to be as true as that the sun shines in yonder heavens, in reference to this unhappy business; but I have no testimony, that will be allowed in a court of justice, to substantiate what I might say, and here Truth itself can have no hearing but through her witnesses. But, gentlemen, there are strange scenes acting in this world of ours. They are forced upon our notice in our daily round of life. Have not each of you, gentlemen, witnessed cases where some poor sufferer was obtruded upon your notice, his wrongs touched your heart, and your understanding convinced you, that he who caused the wrong was well known through all the disguises which he had assumed. You could point your finger at him, and say, ‘Thou art the man;’ but you might not be able to bring such testimony to sustain your consciousness, as would be allowed in a tribunal of justice. And now, gentlemen of the jury and this honourable court, bear with me for a moment, while I repeat a story full of deep meaning, and in my humble judgment, in no obscure manner, illustrating the very point which I wish, in all the solemnity which the momentous issues of this case demand, to press upon you, who have its decision in your hands.

“In this city lived a young man of pure and noble mind; he was destitute of what the world calls wealth, but he was rich in the qualities of a generous heart, and in the possession of mental abilities, and those personal

attractions, which combine to throw around their possessor charms which make their way to every heart. His days were devoted to the faithful discharge of those duties which he owed to employers, to whom he felt bound by strong obligations, and his evenings to the cultivation of an active mind. Within the domestic circle which he called his home was one whose attractions of mind and person were the theme of all who knew her. As kindred elements when brought in contact coalesce and mingle according to the harmonies of nature, these spirits blended their beautiful sympathies, and rested happy in each other's love.

“ Within the same circle was one, not devoid of external graces, nor of many collateral advantages. He was in a fair and prosperous business ; and before him arose the prospect of almost certain wealth. He had, too, a cultivated mind and winning manners, but he wanted an honest heart. Those warm affections, which fire the soul with its purest ardour, he knew nothing of. Virtue and loveliness had no charms for him.

“ With the spirit of him who viewed our happy parents in their new and blissful home, and planned their ruin, he cast an evil eye upon this youthful pair. No outward signs had yet been given that their affections were united, and even to themselves it was unknown. He saw, or thought he saw, the growing union, and every selfish passion was aroused. A lovely being whom, for her own sake, he had never cared for, became to his covetous eye a prize of untold value, when likely to be wrested from his grasp. His plan was quickly laid. No compassion for one who had ever been to him as a friend, could stay for

a moment the cursed design. A blasted reputation is a fair substitute for the assassin's dagger; and with all the hellish art of him he served, around this unsuspecting youth he wove a net of cruel cords, and saw with all the coldness of an icy heart his victim fall a prey. Gentlemen, I see you doubt the truth of what I tell you; you doubt that, in our midst, a being can be found so like a demon of the pit. But stay your judgment; I have a sequel to relate—no fiction of the brain, no spurious child of an excited imagination—but truth in all its sad reality.

“There is now lying on a bed of death, in hourly expectation of the final summons, a lovely female, the ward of an honest and industrious mechanic, trained in principles of strictest virtue, and with a mind spotless as the purest of her sex. She was in the hey-day of youth and health, and possessed of more than an ordinary share of personal attractions. This monster came across her humble path. He ingratiated himself into her favour by months and even years of attention. He won her heart, and then, when in all its honest purity it rested on his honour, he mocked its sacred affections, laughed to scorn its virtue and its truth, and because he could not break through the strong barrier which these had built around her, left her—left her, with her young affections crushed and dead.”

As the speaker uttered this last sentence, he fixed his flashing eye full upon Rudolph Hunt. Pale as though the life-blood had for ever fled, Rudolph started to his feet. A buzz of astonishment swept over the assembly, immediately followed by the hoarse voice of the high constable calling out—

"Silence in the court."

Turning his bright eye at once upon the jurors, and without in the least noticing the extraordinary movement on the part of Rudolph, Theodore continued in the same tone of voice. "Yes—crushed and broken-hearted, she now lies upon the bed of death; and do you now doubt, gentlemen, that he who could thus trample on virtue and loveliness, in the purest and brightest form in which the eye of man can look upon it, would hesitate to blast the reputation of his fellow, when it should suit his ends?"

The speaker paused and fixed his eye a moment on the jury, and then sat down. He had not said all that he designed to say, and to the assembly it was doubtless matter of surprise that he had so abruptly ceased; but he knew that the only hope which remained for his friend was the creation of a serious doubt in the minds of the jury. He felt assured that such a crisis had occurred.

Scarcely had he taken his seat, when Mr. Catchem entered, pale as he could very well be, for he was just from a bed of sickness. As he opened the little gate into the arena of the bar, he turned and admitted two persons who had followed him through the court room, and gave them each a seat by the side of the witnesses. The female was young and not ill-looking; there was an agreeable expression to her countenance, although it was evident that she had either been confined by sickness in her own person, or from watching at the sick-bed of another. As the witnesses cast their eyes upon the strangers, Betty involuntarily clasped her hands and rolled her eyes up; she would, undoubtedly, have made an exclamation, if the fear of the court had not been upon

her. It was the young woman who once caused her so much uneasiness in her inquiries for Mr. Edwards. Sarah recognised her as Lydia, the friend of Gitty, and whose untiring attendance upon the dying one caused her present sickly appearance.

The man who took his seat near her, was also one whom we have seen before ; but we should hardly recognise, in his Sunday suit, our friend the locksmith. This dress had no doubt once been in the fashion of its day, but what day it would be difficult to determine ; probably he had worn it as his best, when a young man ; it had much too youthful an appearance for its wearer now. As he sat down and cast his eyes about, no one could well say to whom in particular they were directed ; they took a wide range, and were in no wise dependent upon each other. One person, however, was conscious that a piercing gaze was occasionally fixed upon him, and whenever it was, he manifested signs of uneasiness.

As soon as Mr. Catchem had given seats to these two individuals, he walked up to the District Attorney and held converse with him ; it seemed to be some matter of much importance, for the questions and answers which passed between them were in tones and gestures of great earnestness.

“ May it please the court, we have, indeed, rested our cause on the part of the prosecution, and perhaps sufficient testimony has already been adduced to prove the charge against the prisoner ; but as satisfactory proof can now be given to identify the prisoner with a transaction that has immediate bearing upon the case, I ask leave of the court for further examination of witnesses.”

"What about the other witnesses James identified at an earlier stage of the trial?"

"I will state the substance, your honour. The officer who attended the prisoner became possessed, a short time since, of some important information relative to the matter, and would immediately have made report thereof, that proper steps might in time have been taken to procure the necessary testimony; but having been seized with sudden illness, he has been unable to attend to business, and has only now arisen from a sick-bed for the very purpose."

"What do you expect to prove, sir, by these witnesses?"

"I expect to prove, may it please your honour, that just previous to the time when this robbery took place, the prisoner at the bar procured a key to be made of a very peculiar construction, and in a manner that excited the suspicion of him whom he employed to make it, and which induced him very particularly to mark the prisoner, whom he is now prepared to identify under oath; and I, also, by another person present, am prepared not only to confirm the testimony of the other witness as to the identity of the prisoner, she having seen him on two several occasions while he was procuring the manufacture of the key, but furthermore to testify against his character as base and worthless."

The counsel for the prisoner at once were engaged in earnest converse with him, during which Edwards was evidently much agitated. The junior counsel then arose:

"May it please the court, we would make no objection

to the introduction of these witnesses; singular and unexpected as are the circumstances, we do not object."

Theodore sat down and felt that all was lost.

"Let the witnesses be sworn." The old man arose and took the usual oath.

"He had been applied to about a month since to make a key of a particular construction, and all he had to make it from was a piece of dough; that some excuse was made why the key was needed, but he did not heed it; he thought like as not there was something wrong, but he did not know; he made a great many keys, sometimes they were made a good use of, and sometimes they warn't." The District Attorney then handed him the key of the chest.

"Is that the key you made?"

"The key I made will unlock the door that this key will unlock, but that is not the key I made. No, sir, I always put my mark on the keys I make."

"You are very sure, however, that it was of this pattern?"

"Sure, sir, very sure; but, sir, here is something which may throw some light on the matter. When the young man paid me for the job, he, by accident, left this knife upon my table. It has a name upon it."

The District Attorney took the knife, and the counsel for the prisoner immediately stepped forward; each one examined it.

The foreman of the jury requested the name should be read to them.

The District Attorney looked at the Judge.

"They are entitled to all the evidence bearing upon the case."

"The name on this knife, gentlemen, is — *James Edwards.*"

A shudder passed through the whole assembly; Sarah leaned upon her uncle Augustus, who was trembling with the agitation which this new development had caused.

"O God! be thou my refuge." It was only whispered in her heart. She began to taste the bitterness of that grief which knows no comforter.

The effect upon Edwards was very marked; his countenance assumed an expression which was not usual to it; fierce passions seemed to be arousing. He spoke to Theodore in a strain of great earnestness, and was about to address the associate counsel, when the Judge, leaning forward, asked the witness—

"Can you identify the person who employed you to make that key?"

"I can, sir."

"Have you seen him since you have been within the court?"

"I have, sir."

"Is that the man who employed you to make this key?" pointing to the prisoner.

The stillness of death reigned throughout the vast room, as the witness, raising his hand and pointing it, spoke in a distinct and deliberate manner—

"Yes, sir, that is the man; I can swear to him."

An hysteric scream broke the solemn silence, and Sarah was immediately carried by her friends, senseless, from the room.

"May it please the court," said Theodore, rising and speaking with great energy, "there is some great mistake;

the witness did not designate my client; he neither pointed to him nor looked at him."

A hum of voices now buzzed through the court, and for a moment the disturbance, caused by the removal of Sarah and the exit of her friends, made it impossible for the voice of the counsel to be heard.

"Silence, silence in the court," and the high constable struck his staff upon the floor with some violence. "Officers, see that all are seated."

"If your honour pleases, the witness did not point out my client as one whom he knew."

"Let the witness confront the prisoner."

"Do you recognise that person as the one who employed you to make the key?"

Again every breath was hushed. Edwards raised his keen bright eye, and fixed it firmly upon the witness. A moment the old man eyed the youth, and then, looking intently round upon the seat where the witnesses had been, appeared much confused.

"I saw him distinctly, your honour, but a moment ago; that young man I have never seen before."

The audience could not be restrained; their feelings had become intensely excited, and a murmur of decided approbation filled the room. The Judge called, in his clear, calm voice—

"Let the court be cleared, officers; unless silence is observed."

"Silence in the court!" and again the officers were busy with their staves amid the crowd.

The senior counsel for Edwards now arose.

"May it please the court, I rise to move an adjourn-

cases of this kind. "Circumstances have thrown the management of this trial which allow me upon the solemn mysterious affairs of time be my heart all now without doubt produce to which will remove every shadow of suspicion in I, therefore, pray the court to grant us an adjournment for another day."

For a few moments the District Attorney was converse with Mr. Graham, who had retired a witness: when Sarah was hurried from the room had not, from the first appeared desirous of going than the simple discharge of his official duty required as he now rose to address the court, he was evidently much gratified as though he had been acting prisoner.

"May it please your honour, I have just learned a full confession has been made by an individual left the court, which entirely clears the young man has been before us, charged with the commission crime. I, therefore, relinquish the cause, and *pro nolle prosequi* be entered."

It would be in vain to attempt a description scene which followed.

The court immediately arose, and all within was in confusion.

The friends of James at once surrounded him anxious to testify the warmth of their congratulations. Mr. Wharton seized his hand, while the big tear down his venerable face.

"God be praised, God be praised," as the Judge said in Mr. Wharton an old friend; he expressed

with much cordiality, and their salutation was hearty and long continued. He then took the hand of Edwards.

"Most truly do I congratulate you, my dear sir. You have borne yourself like a true man."

James could not speak; his emotions were swelling at each moment, as wave after wave came rolling in from that ocean of love and interest in which his heart had once bathed with such delight, and from which, of late, only dark and forbidding clouds had swept upon him.

Theodore now advanced from the circle of lawyers, from whom he had been receiving high compliments for his maiden effort. The young men looked steadily at each other, as, with the warmth of friendship, now sealed for life, their hands were clasped. Tears glistened in their bright eyes, the only expression of volumes of thought, too big for utterance.

"Sarah! Theodore, where is she?" Without answering, Theodore took the arm of his friend, and, accompanied by Mr. Wharton, they left the court, and entered an adjoining room within the building.

Sarah had perfectly recovered, and had just been informed of the result; as soon as she saw James she arose, and he hastened towards her.

"James!"

"Sarah!" and he folded her to his bosom in a fond embrace.

No words passed between them. Words could not convey the fulness of their gushing hearts; it was the hour of love, in all its rich and trustful sweetness, without one alloy to taint its bliss.

Mr. Augustus Hunt and Betty were the only friends,

besides those who had just entered, to witness the meeting. The old man was almost beside himself with joy; again and again he took the hand of James.

"It's the happiest day of my life—it's the happiest day of my life—rot the old chest; it has like to have been the death of me. Uncle Geordie's got all his money, too, and has gone home as happy as a lark."

Betty sat in one corner of the room, keeping a respectful distance, and wiping away the tears of joy that were running down her honest face. James did not forget her; he stepped up and took her hand.

"Well, Betty, things are brighter than when we last met."

"Oh! yes, dear sowl! I told you it would be so."

"Yes, you did, Betty; you had more confidence than any of us."

"And hadn't I good reason to be so, when that dear young leddy was prayin' and prayin', night and day, that ye might be delivered; sure was I, if help was to be had, ye would have it. But, oh, dear! Mr. James, it has like to have kilt me, and such a lump as there is here, and go away it won't, do what I will; and that ould withered gowk, with his eyes seven ways for Sunday, blinking across the room, and sayin' he knew it to be yoursell. Odd, Mr. James, I could have shuck him till the breath was out of him, the old blind fule!"

"Never mind, Betty, it is all over now."

And Betty pounded on her chest: "Oh, dear! oh, dear—this lump, this lump; it grows bigger and bigger."

CHAPTER XIX.

RUDOLPH had made a full confession of the vile attempt upon the character of James Edwards. A combination of circumstances had produced this result; it was not that his heart had become penitent and overcome by true contrition, but he was conscious of deep villany. He had found, from the address which had been pointed at him in the court, that through all the specious covering which he had thrown over the exterior, his true character was discovered. He had learned also that the female witness, who was just ready to be sworn, had, ere she left her home, witnessed the death of that poor trusting girl who had fallen a sacrifice to his faithlessness. Evils were gathering about him which he feared to meet, and by a sudden rush of feeling he had been impelled to make a disclosure to his uncle, the elder Mr. Hunt, at the same time handing him back the money which he had taken from the chest, hoping, no doubt, that the gain of that lost treasure would so mollify the feelings of his uncle as to enable him to obtain some advantage therefrom. But he had made a wrong calculation; his uncle Geordie was filled with rage, and it was only through the powerful intercession of Mr. Augustus Hunt that he was not at once delivered into the hands of the Sheriff; by his means

he was immediately sent from the city, with, however, only a small supply of money, barely sufficient to carry him to the distant West.

James had not been without his suspicions of Rudolph's soundness of heart, and he had, at times, strong surmises that, in some way, Rudolph was concerned in bringing about the calamity which had come upon him; but our first impressions will cling to us, and have an influence over our feelings, even after we are sure that influence is wrong.

James had never forgotten the hour of his deep distress, when the urgent intercession of Rudolph had done much, as he afterwards learned, to procure him that situation which at once raised him from despair and ruin. Neither could he forget the many and repeated acts of generosity which Rudolph had manifested towards him, nor the uniform kindness with which he had treated him. These all together had thrown a chain around his heart, which even many circumstantial proofs of the obliquity of his feelings of late could not break; and it was not until the circumstance of the knife being brought into court, and thus used as a terrible witness against himself, that his mind was fully released from its shackles, and he resolved to forget all past obligations, and save himself from the fangs of a villain while the means remained by which he could accomplish it. He had loaned Rudolph that knife on the very day that it had been thus left, as he now doubted not, by design, to entrap him, in case any suspicions should lead the locksmith to inform against him.

But the net was broken; the bird had escaped from the snare of the fowler. His mind, freed from the terrible

pressure that had been crushing it, was now buoyant and happy; his enemy had fallen and was an outcast, skulking from the sight of those who had ever known him.

At once his noble mind forgot the evil which Rudolph had designed, and thought only of the blasting which had come over the bright prospects of one with whom he had long been a companion; and he resolved, if the thing could possibly be accomplished, to save him yet.

It was the hour of prosperity with James, and his heart, softened by its influence, was full of forgiveness and love. He wanted no revenge, and the thought was painful to him that one human being within the circle of his interest should, on his account, be suffering the pangs of remorse and disappointed expectation. Under the influence of such feelings, and deeply pondering upon the course he should pursue, he entered his old home, the house of Mr. Geordie Hunt, accompanied by Sarah and her uncle Augustus. His reception was cordial as his heart could wish; not one but appeared to rejoice in the proof of his perfect innocence. Matters had scarcely subsided after the deep excitement of the day into the usual quiet of that domestic circle, when James was invited by Mr. Augustus Hunt to step with him into an adjoining room, that they might have a private interview. As they entered the apartment, Mr. Geordie was sitting quietly by the window, looking out at the passing multitude with rather an indifferent stare, as though it were little matter to him what was the absorbing interest that hurried each along, while his hands were busily employed twisting and turning his red silk pocket handkerchief into all kinds of shapes.

Mr. Augustus carefully closed the door, and, taking a

seat by his brother, motioned James to bring a chair and sit near to them.

"That's right, Master James; take a seat, take a seat. We want to talk a little; bless my soul! what a day this has been."

"It has been a bad business—bad business; but you've got all your money again, haven't you, brother?"

"Yes, yes, about all."

"Well, so far, that's good; but it's been a narrow chance for Master James, here. What a villain he must be; but he's gone, and that's an end to it."

"I hope so."

"Well, I guess it is; I don't think, brother, he will ever put foot in your sight after the dressing you gave him; he's got enough of Uncle Geordie, I guess. But now for this other matter; you see, Mr. Edwards," and Mr. Augustus turned his face full upon his brother, although his address was to James. "You see, Mr. Edwards, we have been talking over things a little, and I have been telling my brother some secrets of our family that perhaps I knew more about than he did." It would have been a curious sight just then to watch the contortions which the red handkerchief had to go through. "And we have been thinking, Master James, that this has like to have been a bad business for you, very bad indeed; you have run a very narrow chance."

"I know I have, sir; and I hope I shall ever remember the kind Providence by which I have been delivered."

"Yes, yes, that is all well enough so far as it goes; but I and my brother feel—" and he looked archly at his brother, while the handkerchief whirled round faster and

faster—"I say, I and my brother feel that, seeing all this trouble has come upon you out of our family like, we ought to make you some compensation. You feel so, don't you, brother?"

Mr. Geordie wriggled a little in his chair.

"Yes, yes, no doubt."

"Gentlemen, you are very kind thus to express yourselves; but it is compensation enough for me to know that I am restored again to the good opinion of my friends."

"No doubt, no doubt; that may satisfy you well enough, Master James, but good opinion of friends won't make the pot boil, and as things are now between us, we want to make you a little amends for the trouble you have had, and to put you in a way to be doing for yourself. Now, to cut the matter short, it is our wish, since our nephew has turned out as he has, just to put you into his place. Sit down, sit down, Master James," seeing James about to rise. "Keep your seat, I am not through yet; and there," handing James a paper, "is an order from me on our firm for six thousand dollars; you can pass that to your credit on our books to-morrow—it will be a nest-egg to begin with. Now don't say anything," seeing James about to say a great deal, "don't say anything; I know how you feel."

"May God reward you, Mr. Hunt, for all your noble, generous conduct towards me! And—"

"Hoot, toot, stop with it, James; are you not the same as one of the family now? and it is only taking out of one hand and putting it in the other; besides, remember, James, you have got a richer trust committed to your

hasted his deliverance, and how much
anticipated in numbering him as one of

younger, my dear fellow," said
up. He took his hand affectionately upon his
it is the happiest day

Sarah was waiting to welcome
at what purpose he had been closeted
and as they entered, she came up to
an animated smile lighting up her beautiful
with the brightness of her happiest days;
Agnes took her hand, and placing it in that
youth who stood beside him—

Here, James, I can give you nothing more; God

Sarah held the hand of her lover in a tight embrace,
her arm around the neck of her uncle—

"My dear, good uncle! how shall I ever repay you?
I can do is to pledge you, for myself and James, the
the love of children."

"Well, Sally dear, that will do, that will do."
The old man broke suddenly away; his generous
was on fire, and the big tears had started.

"What is it true?" said Sarah, as she took the arm of
him, to whom her uncle had just then so solemnly com-
mitted her, "that you are designing a visit to Rudolph?
I cannot surely be, James?"

"It is true, Sarah."

"Oh, James, you little know the bitterness that is in
my heart against you."

"Perhaps not; but I go to him with a spirit of kindness, not to upbraid him for the past, but to give him hope for the future. He is now prostrate, alone, friendless; he will, he must appreciate the motives which induce me, under all the circumstances, to seek him out, and offer him encouragement."

"Ah, James! I fear it is a hopeless errand upon which you are intent; and not only hopeless; it is in my view fearfully dangerous."

"Why, I shall be obliged, no doubt, to cross the river in a small boat. I do not, however, apprehend much danger."

"It is not the danger of crossing the river, although the night is dark; that is not the evil which I dread; but would the man who has made such a deadly thrust at your reputation hesitate to take your life? Depend upon it, James, he would not."

"My dear Sarah! such fears are groundless, and should not be indulged; let us try to do our duty; or at least, let me try to do mine. Think of my deliverance to-day! and should I allow an unmanly fear to deter me from the discharge of what appears a duty?"

"My dear James!" and Sarah looked up to him with her beautiful countenance glowing with emotion, "I hope I may never be a hindrance to you in the path of duty. But you have never known Rudolph as I have; he has never exposed to you the blackness of his heart."

"It pains me, Sarah, to do anything which you do not approve."

"Oh! I do approve it;" and she put her hand on his shoulder—"I do approve it: it is just what I should

expect from you, James ; but I have strange apprehensions, when I think of your encountering him alone—if anything should happen !” and she covered her face, as James pressed her to his bosom.

“ Let us trust, Sarah, that in doing as our consciences dictate, there will be a hand to shield us in the hour of danger.”


Sarah yielded, and would no longer persist in opposing his will. At her request, however, he took Jim along with him, but by no means did he think of allowing him to see Rudolph.

She parted from him, and retired to her room ; an uncontrollable foreboding of evil oppressed her mind, and she could only obtain relief in committing him who was now dearer to her than life itself, to the care of her covenant God.

Mr. Wharton had been invited by Theodore Berry to accompany him to the house of his mother, where James was to meet them in the course of the evening. It was too late to think of returning to his home, or he would gladly have done so. He felt for those whom he had left, and could not endure the thought that they should be in suspense ; suffering from the dread uncertainty which hung over the beloved one. He was just turning from the broad thoroughfare into one of the narrower streets which cross it, in the lower part of the city, when his arm was gently touched from behind ; he stopped suddenly, and, looking round—

“ Mr. Tightbody !”

“ It’s me, sir !” Mr. Tightbody could say no more ; he had been walking very rapidly for some time ; and, ~~stopping~~ Mr. Wharton, in his anxiety to overtake him,



had, for a short distance, attempted to run; he was, moreover, under great excitement of mind. His countenance was much flushed, and his breathing heavy.

Mr. Wharton looked at him with great earnestness for a moment, as though questioning with himself what could have brought the little man to the city; and, also, what cause could be operating to produce the evident feeling under which he was labouring.

"Is it all over, sir? is the—is the—is the trial ended? and—"

"It is over, Mr. Tightbody, and our young friend cleared of every shadow of guilt."

"Blest be praised—blest be praised—good-bye, sir! I'm off—I'm off, sir."

But Mr. Wharton had taken his hand, and retained it in a tight grasp.

"Off where, sir? you surely are not intending to return to-night, Mr. Tightbody?"

"This very minute, sir; you see, Mr. Wharton," and he tried to raise himself on tiptoe, so as to reach the ear of the reverend gentleman, "I thought I would steal a march, sir, and so I came off unbeknown to any but my own folks; and now I am right back again: I must let them know the good news, this very night."

"But not, I hope, until you have supped with us—Mr. Berry, this is Mr. Tightbody, a neighbour of ours in the country." Theodore cordially embraced the little man.

"I trust, sir, you will do as Mr. Wharton suggests, and allow me to add, that, as a friend to Mr. Edwards, I must insist upon your going in, and taking a bite with us on this joyful occasion."

"It's too joyful, sir; it's too joyful; and can I be waiting here while that blessed mother and her daughters are sitting with sorrowful hearts, and watching through the long hours of the night?"

"I think, Mr. Tightbody, that if you will remain, both Mr. Edwards and myself will accompany you home; he is to be here this evening to make arrangements for an early start on the morrow."

The little man was much perplexed. He would have preferred being the bearer of the joyful intelligence alone; but he did not see how he could well oppose the suggestion of Mr. Wharton. He therefore bowed low, and merely replying, "At your service, gentlemen," entered the dwelling of Theodore, which was close at hand.

CHAPTER XX.

THE shades of night were just closing in, as Edwards and his attendant were landed on the opposite shore. The stage-house stood upon the high ground, a little back from the river, and could only be distinguished through the large trees which surrounded it, by the light from two of its windows. He threaded his way along the winding path which led up to the house, followed at some distance by his attendant, whom he had previously instructed should not be seen by Rudolph, if it proved that he was still there.

James could not help feeling a little trepidation as he found himself drawing near the place where he had reason to suppose the unhappy young man then was. The opinion Mr. Augustus Hunt had expressed concerning him, and the fears of Sarah, made an impression on his mind, in spite of all his efforts to believe that they were groundless, or, at least, greatly magnified by their imagination. The place and time were also calculated to add to any little feeling of gloom. The deep shadows of the large trees which lined the path he was treading, the stillness which reigned around, were rendered more striking, in contrast with the din of the city he had just left. The waves gently breaking along the rocky shore,

the distant hum that came softly over the waters, were the only sounds that broke the silence of this lonely spot.

As he approached the building, a long, low house, he saw a light but from one end, which proved to be the bar-room. He entered without knocking. The bar-keeper was sitting before the fire, and two or three men, apparently stage-drivers and ostlers, were resting on the benches in different parts of the room. The former at once turned towards him.

"Is there a young man here from the city, intending to take the stage in the morning?"

"There is a young man here who expects to take the early stage; but where he is from, I don't know."

"Is he about the house?"

"He has gone to his room; he asked for a light a few minutes since."

"Can you show me the room?"

The young man hesitated a moment.

"Why, yes; I can show you the room."


He took a light and led the way into a small passage, and from thence into what appeared to be the hall of the house. Several doors opened into it, to one of which James was directed; he knocked gently, and a voice, which he recognised as Rudolph's, called—

"Who's there?"

"A friend; James—James Edwards."

The door was immediately opened, and Rudolph stood before him; his brow was knit, and his whole countenance stern and cold.

"May I ask your special business in thus intruding upon me?"



"I come as a friend, Mr. Hunt."

"Indeed! then why so formal? Rudolph you have always called me."

"Pardon that inadvertence, Rudolph, but believe me that as a friend I have sought you."

"Come in, then, and be seated."

James took a chair, and Rudolph, closing the door, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. James noticed the act; and, for an instant, unpleasant thoughts rushed into his mind; but they could not rest there; strong in the consciousness of the purity of his intentions, his mind retained its firmness. Rudolph did not take a seat, but kept walking about the room, apparently attending to matters connected with his departure, for James heard him clasp the lock of his valise, and fasten it; he, at length, walked up to where James was sitting.

"You say you have come as a friend; may I know what your friendly designs are?" As he said this, he did not look at Edwards, but kept his eye fixed upon a piece of paper which he was folding, evidently with no other design than that of affording a diversion to his sight from an object that was not agreeable to him. He shrunk from the clear, honest gaze of Edwards.

James arose, and extended his hand, but Rudolph did not notice the act, or did not wish to commit himself.

"Believe me, Rudolph, I have no feelings towards you but those of perfect kindness; and my errand to you now is an errand of love."

"Edwards, I don't want any of your cant; it may answer for young girls and old women; but I tell you, candidly, I don't want to hear it; you have come here,

I suppose, to condole with me, that, through you, I have become an outcast from society." Rudolph's voice grew harsher and louder as he said this, and he turned his face full upon Edwards; a contemptuous sneer was visible, as well as fierce and deadly passion; his brow was knit, his eye distended, and his teeth compressed.

"What is there you can bring by way of consolation to me?"

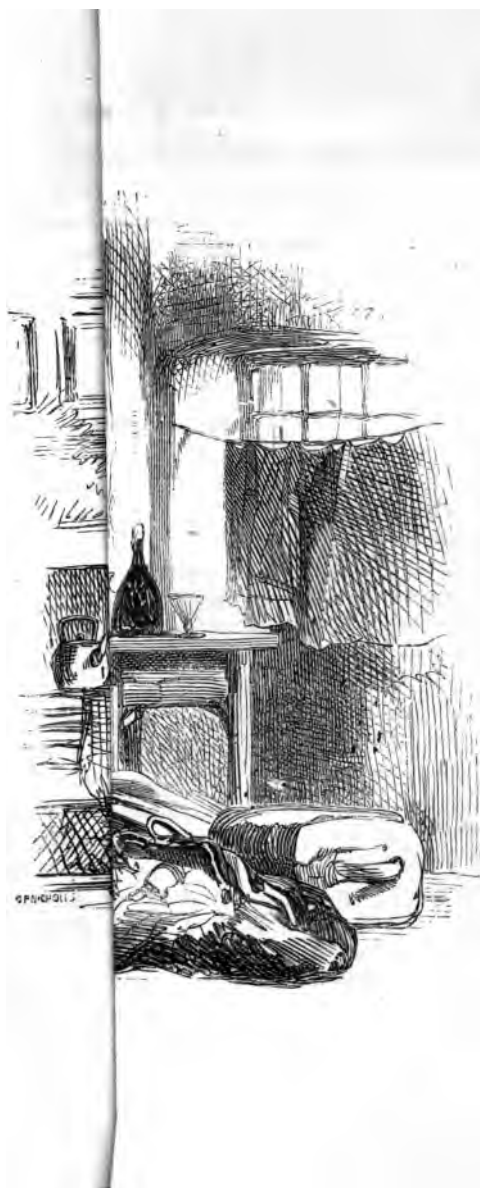
"I bring you, Rudolph, my forgiveness; and you cannot but feel that you have endeavoured to do me a dreadful evil; but I most heartily forgive it all; and I bring you a message from your uncles, that may give you hope for the future."

"You bring me forgiveness! And who asked your pardon? You tell me that my uncles may still aid me, and, perhaps, through your intercession—you who have wormed yourself into favour with those whose friendship was my birthright, and have now come to triumph in my misery."

"Rudolph, you do me great injustice, and you know you do. God is my witness that I have ever shunned to injure you; and my sole object here to-night is—"

"Edwards, your words are idle; they are wasted upon me; this world is not wide enough to contain us both; take that and defend yourself," drawing a pistol from his breast, and handing it to James, at the same instant cocking another, and taking deadly aim. "I shall count five, and fire; so be quick."

James was horror-stricken for a moment; but, as Rudolph began to count, he threw the pistol which had been put into his hands across the room, and rushed



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towards Rudolph to wrest the other from his murderous grasp. But Rudolph anticipated his attempt, and fired. James fell to the floor; Rudolph sprang to the window, opened it, seized his valise, and was out in an instant.

The noise of the pistol soon brought the members of the family to the door; as it was locked, and no answer made to their call, it was burst open. James lay weltering in blood, and apparently dead or dying. They, however, raised him, and placed him upon the bed; and, by using what means they had on hand to revive him, he was enabled to give some directions. His attendant was despatched to the city to inform his friends and order medical aid; and an express was sent to bring his mother and sisters.

Mr. Tightbody was beginning to be very impatient, as the evening was wearing away, and James had not made his appearance, when a loud knock at the street door, and a hasty call for Mr. Wharton, as soon as the servant opened it, startled the two gentlemen, who were deeply engaged in conversation. Theodore immediately stepped into the passage.

"The man wants the Rev. Mr. Wharton."

"Mr. Wharton is here. Do you wish to see him?"

"He is wanted at Mr. Hunt's as soon as possible; there is some great trouble, and they wish him to come as quick as he can."

Mr. Timothy did not exactly understand the nature of the summons which Mr. Wharton had so suddenly

received; but was glad of an opportunity to slip off, inwardly resolving that nothing should any longer impede his progress towards home. His mind was glowing with the glorious idea of being the first to communicate the good tidings. He had not relished the plan which Mr. Wharton had proposed, and would, in some way, have willingly declined it. He was not by nature or habit a waterman; and, when he reached the ferry stairs, and saw how dark the night looked, and how very black was the water, except where the white caps occasionally glittered in the distance, giving tokens of a fresh breeze upon the open stream, he heartily wished that he had started earlier.

"Rather a fresh breeze to-night!" As he said this, the boatmen were resting on their oars, and waiting for their passenger, the only one who was to cross.

"It's a gittin' late; and, if all's ready, we're off."

Mr. Timothy sprang in, hastily took the seat assigned him, and, putting one hand on each side of the boat, held on with a tight grasp.

"There seems to be considerable wind!"

"It's a freshenin' up some; there'll be more a stirrin' afore we get over."

And it was just as they said. Mr. Timothy was much tossed in spirit, although he made out to keep his body well fastened by the strong braces he had thrown out on each side.

There is a feeling of security, which one has when first treading on the solid ground after a little uncertain rolling and pitching upon the treacherous deep, that is truly delightful, and the more so if there should have been any

little misgivings as to the perfect safety of our situation. When Mr. Timothy got fairly out of the "cockle shell," as he was pleased to denominate the little craft which had borne him safely "o'er the ferry," and felt that he was in very deed upon something that could bear his weight without dodging and twisting under him, his spirits were so animated, he felt that he could even drive past the "Devil's Dancing Place" (a spot that he must pass on the road, which had ugly stories told about it), and fear nothing.

Mr. Timothy was a careful man, as well in the matter of expense as in regard to the safety of his person. It was the custom in those days, and it may be in these, but it was very much so then, for public-houses to have sheds near their premises, appropriated to the use of such customers as preferred to carry their own provender for the beasts they drove; and as the care of such teams was not a matter of concern to the owner of the premises, the building was often at a little remove from the barns and sheds, where everything was under the keeping of the ostlers of the tavern.

Mr. Timothy usually carried his own provender; he had also, this day, thought best to bring with him that plague of his life, Pomp, and he did it, as he said, to "keep him out of mischief," although it might, perhaps, be as near the truth to say that he expected to ride home in the dark, and through places where a "black varmint" might be better company than one's own thoughts; at any rate, Pomp was brought along, and put in charge of the horses and the barouche attached under the shed, which happened, in the present instance, to be at some

distance from the house, and at the corner of a road that ran directly to the ferry.

"And now do you mind, Pomp, and hear me! As the sun goes down, take the oats from the bag that lies there away under the fore seat, and divide it between them."

"Yes, massa, me will."

"And then, do you sit in the carriage; you hear?"

"Yes, massa, me hear ebery word."

"Do you sit in the carriage, and watch them till they are done, and no be scurrying round the neighbourhood. I shall be back anon, and gin I catch you off the seat or hereabouts, won't I finger you!"

"Yes, massa, me hear 'em."

And thus Mr. Timothy left matters—Pomp making strong promises of obedience, and thinking the while what a nice time he should have in disposing of a little basket of sundries which Ma'am Bet had carefully put up for him.

It had become, to use Mr. Tightbody's own words, "exceeding dark," and the lights which shone from the house were not of much use beyond the line of trees which surrounded it, as only an occasional glimmer could be seen through the openings in the thick branches. They served, however, to give Mr. Timothy the bearing of the localities in the vicinity, and he walked bravely on, although, as the grounds were ascending, not at a very rapid rate. Soon he saw a dark object ahead, which he knew to be the goal at which he was aiming, and towards which, as the obstacle of the hill had been surmounted and the way was level, he progressed rapidly. All at once, however, he stopped; and if it could have been

possible just then to take cognisance of the matter, it would have been seen that Mr. Timothy was very pale. His eyes had for some time been widely stretched, in order to take in all the rays of light that were to be had; but now he opened them, if possible, wider still; then he rubbed them, and, peering into the mist before him, began to feel the cold chills creeping up his back, and the hat fairly moving on his head.

He would have spoken, but the creature was one of such a questionable appearance that he really felt unable to do so; and it was very near to him. Nothing separated them but the little ditch which ran by the side of the road, Mr. Timothy being in the middle of the road, and the object which thus alarmed him standing by the fence, and apparently holding fast to it. Mr. Timothy had never heard of black ghosts; but if there could be such things, he would have said that it was the spirit of Pomp. The same size, the same odd shape, only it had a queer little white garment on, that was not at all fitted as a covering for daylight or decent company. The road near this struck off to the stage-house; and Mr. Timothy, after standing a while and gazing at the spectre, his thoughts by no means becoming more reconciled to its appearance, very gently, and by almost an imperceptible movement, began to move towards the house. Could it be possible! was he correct!—was the thing really advancing towards him! He quickened his pace; but there it was, keeping about the same distance, and moving along after him with noiseless steps.

It was no time for trifling; he made more speed; skipped once or twice. The creature gained upon him;

he started into a race, and just then a whisper came upon the cold night air, "Massa." Mr. Timothy fairly flew, and, without stopping for leave or licence, burst in all his trepidation straight into the bar-room.

The room was, by this time, well filled, for the report of the tragedy which had been enacted that evening had spread through the neighbourhood.

"What the dickens is the matter now?" said a fat old gentleman, who started from his chair and held it up before him, while all were more or less agitated, and looked at the intruder in a very inquisitive manner.

Mr. Timothy was too much out of breath to do anything in the way of explaining matters. He walked up to the bar, and then from that to the fire-place, and so around the room, until it became a matter of doubt with some whether he was not a subject for some lunatic asylum, and had just escaped. Presently he stopped near to the fat old gentleman above mentioned, and they both looked at each other for some little time without speaking.

"You have run hard, sir! Anything happened?—been frightened?"

"Oh, no—oh, no, not at all."

"You came in such a kind of a hurry, neighbour, that I didn't know what was to pay; and seeing there's been such doin's here a'ready to-night, it kind a startled me. One murder is enough for one night."

"What!—what is it you say? Murder!—was it a—black?"

"No, it isn't jist a murder yet, but p'rhaps it may turn out something like it. Ain't you heered of the

young man as was shot in this very house not an hour ago?"

"Shot!"

"Yes, shot with a pistol; and the fellow's cleared out."

"Hulloa, hulloa! bring out a light here, some of you."

All rushed to the door, for the call was a very loud one, and the maker of it seemed to be alarmed.

"What is it, Bill?" called out one of the foremost.

"Bring a light here quick, will you? Get out, you devil you!" and the man, with his hat off, flew through the door, all making way for him, while just behind him, and clinging to his coat-tail, was a small-sized negro, all head and legs, and no body; he was under bare poles, with no mortal covering but a white under-garment.

There was great confusion in the bar-room; and some even went out at the first opening that presented itself. Mr. Timothy was not lucky enough to get out, so he brought up in one corner, and there stood, casting a look of the most unreserved astonishment at the poor object that had thus pounced into the room.

The fat old gentleman who had been talking with Mr. Timothy still kept fast hold of the chair, and as it happened that the black creature made towards him, and tried to get behind him, he raised his weapon aloft, and was going to make sad work with somebody's head, when his hand was arrested by Mr. Timothy.

"There's no danger, sir, no danger; I know him."

"You do, hey?"

"I do, sir. There is some great mistake. Pomp, how is this?—what do you mean, running round in this shape, and—and—alarming folks? Where are your clothes, sir?"

"Golly massa, me don't know."

"Don't know! What business had you to strip yourself in this shape?"

"Me no do it, massa; him do it all; strip all clean off."

"Pomp, don't lie, now; tell me the truth." Pomp had squatted down, and was trying to make the most of what little covering he had. He raised one hand.

"It's livin' trut, massa. He take 'em all off, and den he drive de carriage and horses. Whew! dey go spankin', just like de wind."

"My ——! Pomp! Gentlemen—a lamp—a lantern! Will any of you go with me? The carriage and horses gone? Where?—who took them?—you black scoundrel, tell me quick, or I'll take every bit of skin off you. Who took them?"


Mr. Timothy looked round for the man who had gone for a lantern.

"He's a coming, sir," said the fat gentleman, "but I think now, sir, I can unravel this whole mystery. You left a barouche and span of horses under the shed at the corner, in charge of this—this—boy, or man, I don't know which; he looks like a little of both; didn't you, sir?"

"I did, sir, and a fine span it is too."

"Exactly so; that fellow who shot the man in this house has, no doubt, taken the liberty to take a ride with that same span; they will help him on his way pretty considerably fast; now, that is my guess."

Mr. Timothy seized the lantern, and bestowing his overcoat upon Pomp, went forth to see what was to be seen.



CHAPTER XXI.

Mrs. EDWARDS and her two daughters had passed a day of mental agony ; they could do nothing to aid him on whom their earthly hopes rested, and could only wait with patience the result, whatever it might be.

When the noble ship is caught by the mighty tempest, and the waves are tossing in their fury, and the winds howl through the thick cordage, tear the strong sails from their fastenings, and snap the towering masts, it fills the soul with admiration to behold the fearless crew, far off on the bare spars, clinging to the flying ropes, and rocking aloft through the driving storm as the swaying masts career far over the boiling sea.

But not less of mortal daring and true manly courage does it require, to keep the steady watch far down in the depths of the heaving ship, to feel the heavy plunge, and hear, far up, the roaring of the mighty tumult.

That widow had, long since, learned to nestle within the covert of that Rock, which shelters from the cruel storm and the scorching heat.

Through the long hours of that day, her spirit raised its trembling eye above. Earth had no resting-place for her hope. Its enjoyments for the future were all trembling on the poise ; and so she looked away from them ;

high to the throne above she lifted her strong desires; and at times she almost thought her humbled heart was ready for the deadliest blow. But as the shades of evening gathered, and the night came on; as the hour approached when, possibly, tidings might come—tidings, whose thrilling notes must pierce the very depths of her soul, the mother was again alive within, and her yearning spirit swayed to and fro, through the long sweep that separates hope and despair.

It was at the dead hour of midnight, when her watching ear heard the distant rumbling of a carriage. Nearer and nearer it approached; her very heart rested its beat; it stopped at the gate, and in an instant more a loud knocking at the door aroused each inmate of the little family.

“Does Mrs. Edwards live here?” said a young man to the widow herself, who had gone calmly forward to meet the messenger of weal or woe.

“She does; I am Mrs. Edwards.” The face of the youth paled as he looked into her beautiful, yet sorrow-stricken countenance.

“Your son, madam, has sent for you to come to him immediately; he has been severely injured, and may not recover.”

“Injured? How? By what means? Tell me—tell me quick.”

“Indeed, madam, I can tell you but little about it; I was sent off in great haste. He has been shot by some person, and is now lying very low at the stage-house, near the ferry, opposite New York.”

“How has the trial terminated? Can you tell me?”

"I know nothing about it, madam."

To describe the conflict of contending thoughts and feelings, is not within the power of a common pen. The effect produced was that which often fills the soul, when amid the war of elements an awe pervades it that hushes all other feelings into quiet. God, in His terrible might, seems near, and man must be still.

The mother and sisters looked at each other in calm, mute agony, and at once prepared to go on their sad journey.

Mr. Wharton, accompanied by Theodore, was soon at the mansion of Mr. Hunt; a carriage was in waiting at the door, and there was an appearance of confusion in the passage as though persons were preparing to depart.

As they entered the dwelling, Sarah flew to Mr. Wharton.

"Oh, Mr. Wharton! James!—James!" She almost fell into his arms, and her feelings broke forth in sobs and tears.

Mr. Augustus Hunt saw the agonised look of Mr. Wharton, and immediately led him one side, and in a few words communicated the heart-rending intelligence.

"The Lord's will be done." He stepped up to Sarah, and affectionately embracing her, "Let us be still, my child; this last evil is not worse than the first. We can better afford to lose our dear James, than to see him an outcast with a stain of deep disgrace on his character for life; better death than an ignominious doom. But let us hasten to him."

"My dear uncle, I must go; you will not refuse me!"

"You shall go, my darling."

They were soon at the ferry; the night was dark, and the heavy waves rolled along by the sea-breeze, which was now quite fresh, dashed against the long piers, as their little boat shot into the open stream; not a word was passed from one of the little company; thoughts too engrossing held each bosom in close communion with itself. The rough water upon which they tossed, and the spray that occasionally flew over them, they heeded not, but it seemed a long, long time before the rowers raised their oars, and moored on the opposite shore.

As they entered the dwelling, the first inquiry was—

"Is the young man alive?"

"He is."

The surgeon, accompanied by his assistant, immediately repaired to the room where James was still lying.

Mr. Wharton, Mr. Augustus Hunt, Sarah, and Theodore retired to await the professional report.

How much of life is sometimes compressed within a short half hour! What thrilling anxieties work up the very depths of the soul! raising the excited feelings, now upon the pinnacle of hope, and now plunging it down—down to darkness and gloom, like the shadows of the grave!

At length the foot of the surgeon was heard approaching the room. Every eye was fixed with eloquent intensity upon him as he opened the door; but not a sign could they read upon his calm, cold countenance.

"He has had a narrow escape!"

"Then you think he can possibly recover, Doctor?" said Mr. Wharton, stepping up to him.

"Yes, sir; I think he will undoubtedly recover, but he must be kept quiet; he has lost much blood."

Mr. Wharton and Sarah were first permitted to enter the sick chamber.

The door was opened by the attendant, and they stood by the side of him they loved so much, and looked upon his pallid countenance, almost marked with the lineaments of death. No word was spoken. He looked up at Sarah and smiled. She stooped over him, and kissed his fair forehead, and then whispered in his ear—

"I shall stay with you, James."

It was ascertained that the express which had been sent for Mrs. Edwards and her daughters, would probably arrive by nine o'clock the next morning, and Mr. Wharton, anxious to relieve their troubled minds, resolved upon an early start, that he might meet them on their way.

That morning broke in all the beauty of a clear, bright sky and bracing air; as the yellow streaks of light were shooting up from the east, this true-hearted friend stepped forth to go on his errand of love. James had slept well; he was much refreshed, and all danger was felt to be passed; the joyful hope that filled the breast of Mr. Wharton inspired him with the elasticity of youth, and five miles were soon passed over, and he had reached the tavern where he designed to await the little company of mourners. A carriage, driven rapidly, was soon descried, and he advanced beyond the premises, as he wished not to expose to the public gaze the intense emotions of that

agonised group. As the vehicle approached, he motioned the driver to stop. His cheerful countenance at once inspired their hopes.

"Oh, Mr. Wharton! Mr. Wharton! James lives?"

"Yes; he lives and will no doubt recover. All is well, praise God, my dear madam; your son is cleared from every blot upon his name, and his body, we trust, will soon be healed of the injury he has received."

Silently the mother's heart sent forth its gushing notes of praise to Him whose power and presence she had so long, so ardently implored, and then its fulness was poured out in tears of holy joy; fondly the lovely sisters clasped their mother in their arms, and mingled the overflowing of their happy hearts with hers.

Soon was the distance passed that separated them from the spot towards which their yearnings would have hastened the speed of an angel's wing.

As they entered the hall of the house, Sarah was there with her bright smile to meet the new friends of her heart.

Mary hastened towards her.

"Is this Sarah?"

"And is this Mary?"

And they were clasped together in a fond embrace.

"My dear child," said Mrs. Edwards, as she folded the happy, noble girl to her heart, "may Heaven's best blessings rest upon your noble conduct to my dear James."

CHAPTER XXII.

It cannot be denied that the great city has enlarged itself during the last forty years, and that great changes have taken place in the character of its buildings, and the style of living among its inhabitants.

Whether these changes are upon the whole for the best, it is scarcely worth the trouble to inquire; because all the reasoning of philosophers will not avail to place things as they have been.

But with those who remember the city forty years since, there must remain an impression of substantial comfort, of good home-living, which does not strike the mind from the establishments of the present day. There was then a very pleasant and convenient agreement between the place of business and the house. It was often but a flight of stairs, or the turning of one or two corners, and the cold details of the counting-house were exchanged for the smiles and heart-enticing scenes of the domestic fireside.

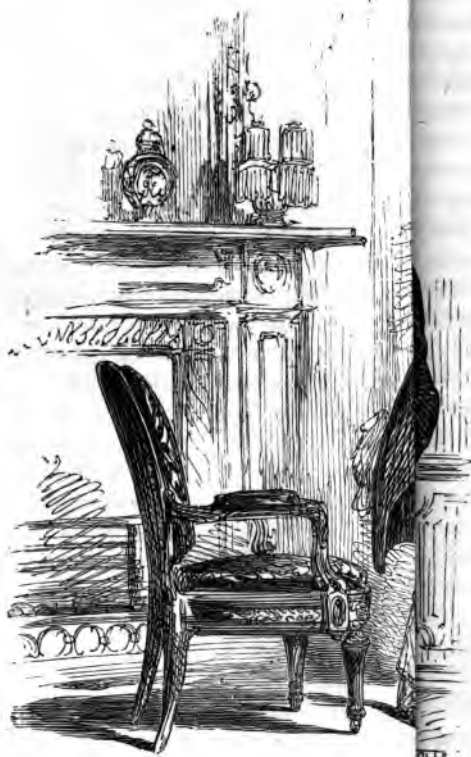
There had been considerable "fixing" to do about a plain, but substantial-looking house, in one of the lower streets. I do not mean by this that the front was taken down, and a new one, ornamented with sculptured stone, run up in its place. But the wooden stoop was taken

away, and some stone steps with a plain iron railing substituted; the broken brick pavement was removed and replaced with brown flagging. Outside as well as inside, carpenters and painters were busy putting a new face upon things, until the dusky appearance of the premises had vanished, and a light and cheerful aspect was thrown over all its parts; and as the passer-by would cast a glance through the long entry to the snug back building, that rested so quietly in the large and shaded yard, and then into the spacious rooms, shining in their new dress, and showing, with all the freshness of their first days, the ornamental carvings that ran over the folding-door and above the fire-place, an impression was at once received, that it was a very comfortable place for anyone to make a home in.

This work had been going on during the month of April, and by the first of May, I do not mean the first day of May, but early in that month, there were, for several days, occasional loads of furniture deposited at the door and carried off into the interior of the building. A few females and an elderly gentleman could be clearly seen arranging things in the different rooms; until, finally, everything seemed to be completed, for the dust was swept out of the front door, down the steps (there were only two of them), and finally out into the gutter. The pavement was then washed off, and the whole place looked as though it was in readiness to receive company.

May is, in general, a beautiful month; it has its squalls, and showers, and sometimes its chilly days; but it has bright suns that send their gladdening warmth not only





upon the opening flower, but even to the very heart of man. It has sparkling days, such as inspire hope, and love, and kindly feeling; they thaw away the frosts of winter, and free Nature from her icy chain. Few can feel gloomy on a bright, warm May day.

It was on one of these days, the brightest that *some* ever remember to have seen, about nine o'clock in the morning, two carriages filled with smiling faces stopped at the door of the said house, and more than one neighbour stepped to their window to see what was going on.

From the first carriage an elderly gentleman alighted; the same who had been seen superintending the repairs, &c.; he was easily recognised, for he had a remarkably round face, and his eyes twinkled very fast; any one who had once seen the face, would be apt to remember it. But he was now arrayed in quite a gala dress, for he had on a blue coat and brass buttons, drab cassimer small clothes, and white top boots. He sprang in a lively manner from the carriage and gave his hand to a beautiful girl; she needed, however, but little assistance, for she came forth with the grace of a fawn, and bounded up the steps and into the house as though the very stones had each a spring to send her forward.

And next, he handed forth a lady of more advanced years, although from the ease and elasticity of her step, she might, doubtless, have equalled the younger in rapidity of movement. But her demeanour was staid, elegant, and in perfect keeping with the manners of one who might have reached the age of forty.

Taking his hat, which was a broad-brimmed beaver, from his head, the elderly gentleman gave his arm to this

last-described lady, and she ascended with him into the house.

The second carriage now drove up, and a young man, well dressed, stepped out, and gave his hand to the lady who had been sitting beside him. He certainly seemed proud as she took his arm and entered the house, and well he might be, for a lovelier girl of nineteen could not have been found in many an assemblage of earth's beautiful ones.

And from that same carriage, there then came forth another young man of fair form and manly look. His countenance was rather pale, but it may have appeared so in contrast with his hair, which was so very black, and his eye, so keen and vivid. He gave his hand to another fair one by whom he had been seated; but in an instant the elderly gentleman was by the carriage.

"Sally, dear, lean on my arm; James must not exert himself."

"Oh! I do not lean on him, uncle; see, I help-support him, although he will not acknowledge that he needs any assistance."

The young man smiled at the dear one who clung to his arm, and who evidently was not an oppressive burden to it, as they ascended the steps.

As the last pair entered the house, the old gentleman closed the door and the carriages drove off.

For a short time there was a going about by all the parties from room to room, and from one nook and corner to another, until the whole had been surveyed; when the two young persons who had entered the house last, and for whom all this preparation had been made, came up,

walking arm-in-arm, to the old gentleman as he stood reclining against the mantel-shelf, and looking about with a very happy and contented air.

The young man put forth his hand, and it was grasped in a very friendly manner, while the lovely fair one by his side threw both her arms around the neck of the old man, silently weeping tears of happiness.

"Mr. Hunt, I know not what to say, nor how to express the emotions which fill my heart; your kindness has followed me so long, has been manifested in so many ways, and especially in this last token of it—this beautiful house, which you have fitted up with so much care."

"Not a word, James, not a word, you will be good children to me; I have no fear of it."

"We have now, my dear sir, but one more wish, to make our happiness complete; and it is this, that you will conclude to make this house your home; Sarah and I pledge to you all that two faithful children can do, to make you happy."

A moment he wiped away the tears which had started freely as James spoke.

"I have made up my mind so to do; here, I wish to live and die; but everything here is yours, and at your disposal. You and Sarah are sole master and mistress. God bless you!"

The little party that witnessed this scene of domestic interest, was each one a deeply concerned spectator.

It was the bridal party of James Edwards and his beloved Sarah. They had been married the previous evening at the house of Mr. Geordie Hunt, and were now taking possession of their new home.

Mrs. Edwards and her two daughters, Theodore Berry and Mr. Augustus Hunt, had accompanied the happy bride and groom.

Theodore Berry and Mary Edwards had been special attendants upon the wedding ceremony, and there is every reason to believe that, before long, some kind friends will be invited to perform the same office for them.

Mrs. Edwards will remain a few days with the happy pair, and then return with her daughters to take possession of the White Cottage, which James has purchased for her as a permanent home.

The first happy day had been passed; cheerful lights were throwing their radiance through the ample parlours; Mrs. Edwards and her daughters were seated together upon the sofa, while James and Sarah were walking to and fro, recounting some of the scenes upon which their memories loved to dwell.

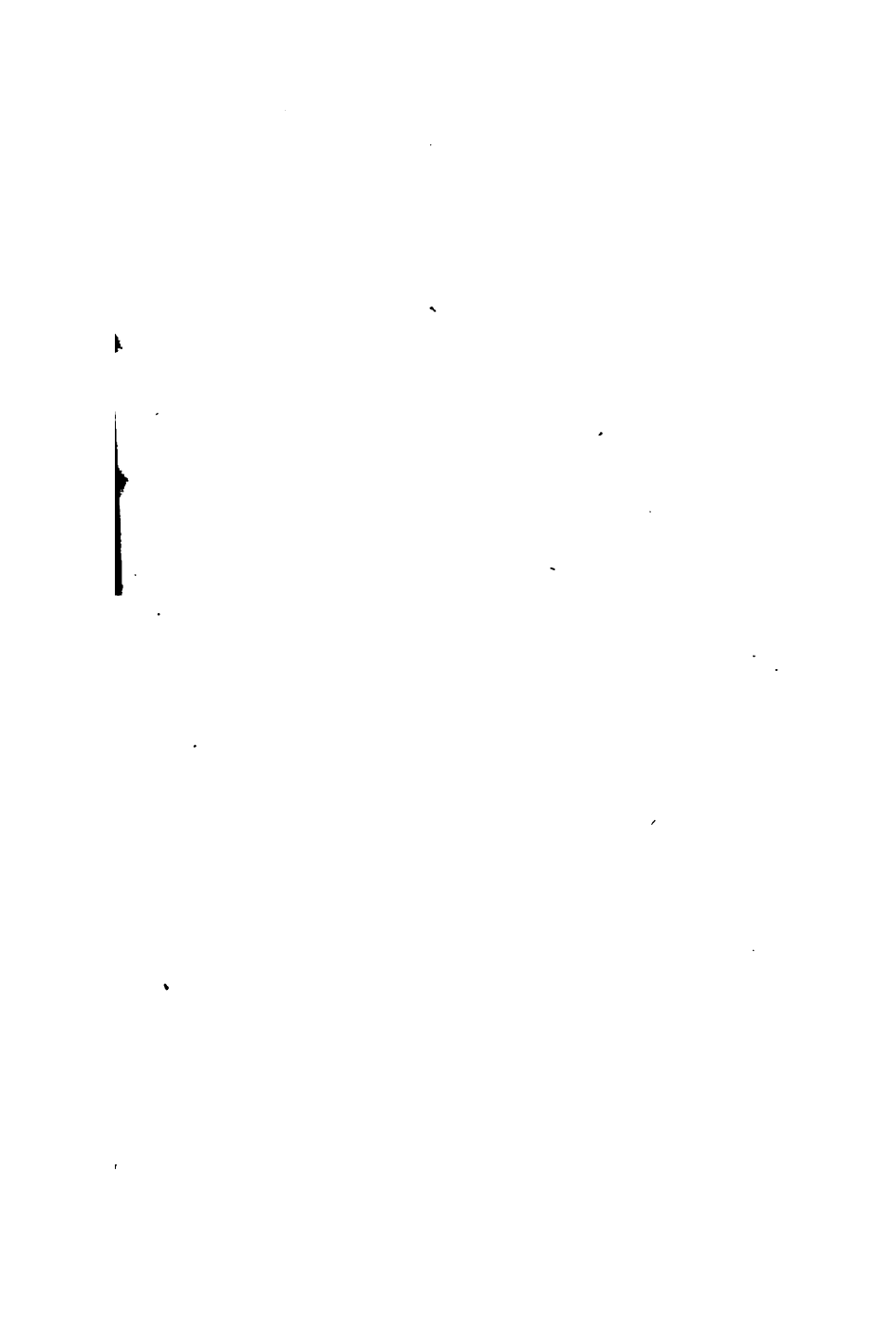
"Well, my son! I think that I and your sisters can say you have fully redeemed your pledge; faithfully have you provided for us when your means were very small, and now, in your abundance, you have made us rich partakers. That home, which you have purchased for us, will be precious, a thousand-fold precious beyond its moneyed value."

"My dear mother, I beg you to make no mention of what I have done; I promised a great deal, and have had a disposition to do as I engaged; but my own agency has been very trifling. The Lord has brought about all this, and I have been but a mere instrument in His hand."

"Yes, James, that is all true. The Lord has raised

you up friends, and shielded you from enemies. He has blessed you as few young men are blessed; you have the present comforts of life and the prospect of future wealth. But I wish your dear Sarah joy in the husband she has chosen, more from what I know of your devotion as a son, than for all your other bright prospects."

"And, my dear mother," said Sarah, as she took the hand of Mrs. Edwards, and looked up with all her lovely spirit beaming from her bright countenance, "I value him more on that account, than for all the wealth we have in prospect; it was the support of my confidence in my darkest day, and it was the foundation of my joy when, last evening, I united myself for ever to him."



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